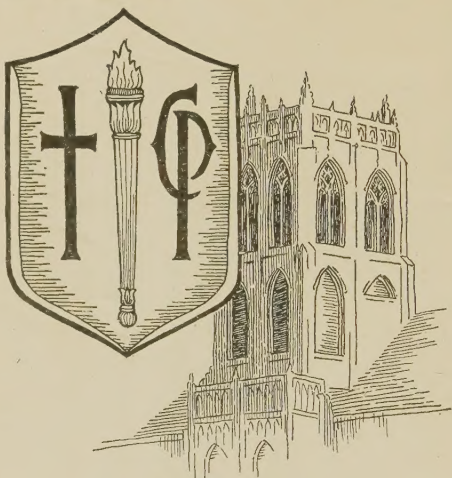

THE LIFE
OF
A LITTLE
COLLEGE

ARCHIBALD
MAC MECHAN



COLLEGE
OF THE PACIFIC



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

THE LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE
AND OTHER PAPERS

THE
LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE
AND OTHER PAPERS

BY
ARCHIBALD ^{McKellar} MACMECHAN



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

1914

COPYRIGHT, 1914, BY ARCHIBALD MACMECHAN

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Published October 1914

17463

PR

6000

M169L5

H. E. B. 4 Dec. 1925

TO DOCTOR "EBEN" MACKAY

Although daily intercourse for twenty years affords the amplest warrant for pronouncing on a man's character, I find that the conventions which hedge about a dedication debar me from proclaiming my opinion of yours. Still one hint I will hazard. Had Bunyan known you, he could have added some finer touches to his portrait of Faithful. For twenty years we have worked side by side in harmony; and now, in the institution we serve, we begin to see what we foresaw. The generous Little College has given me much, — work, with time to think, bread, and a loyal friend; and so, in recognition of these great gifts, I desire to honour myself by associating — without your knowledge or consent — these little college essays and your name.

17463
CONTENTS

THE LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE	I
LITTLE COLLEGE GIRLS	37
THE VANITY OF TRAVEL	53
TENNYSON AS ARTIST	83
BROWNING'S WOMEN — THE SURFACE	121
THIS IS OUR MASTER	141
CHILD OF THE BALLADS	165
"THE BEST SEA-STORY EVER WRITTEN"	179
EVANGELINE AND THE REAL ACADIANS	199
EVERYBODY'S ALICE	233
VIRGIL	273

NOTE. Several of these essays have already been published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Independent*, and *The University Magazine*. By the kind permission of D. C. Heath and Co., I am enabled to reprint part of my introduction to *Select Poems by Tennyson*, copyright, 1907.

THE LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

THE LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

I

THERE may appear a certain degree of impertinence in a college which is neither old nor famous venturing to have a history of its own. But history is largely a matter of right perception into the real nature and true proportions of things. All education is a movement of the race towards the light, and wherever men have organized to spread the light, there history has been made. Only the seeing eye is needed, and the understanding heart, and the diligent pen to set the story down. The claim of the little unknown college to recognition by the world is not absurd, for its history is the history of an idea.

For that idea a romantic background was provided by the alarms and splendours of a world-wide war. The nations took sides with or against the Corsican, and the years were filled with battles by land and sea. One stanch little British province, which had stood fast when her sister colonies revolted, now bore her share of loss and glory with the Motherland. The provincial capital, founded as a military necessity, has seen three

4 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

great wars. Though more than once in danger of assault and capture, she has remained a maiden city. In war-time the harbour was constantly filled with ships, and the streets were thronged with soldiers, coming and going on their divers errands. Smart frigates and dashing privateers made port almost daily with their captures. Prize money flowed in rivers, and civic life was a rich, gay pageant. In the last months of the war, a small expedition, so many transports, with details of so many regiments, escorted by so many men-of-war sailed out of the harbour one day; destination, as the newspaper said, unknown. Their destination was a hostile port which they took without much ado and held and ruled for more than half a year. When peace was declared, the forces came back with some ten thousand pounds sterling in the military chest. That sum of money won in war formed the original endowment of the little college.

For more than a twelvemonth, the money lay untouched, until the man came upon the scene with the idea. He was a Scottish earl who had been a schoolmate of Sir Walter's at Edinburgh and had attained high distinction in the army. He had served his king with honour in every quarter of the globe, and, now that the Corsican was safe in St. Helena, he was made governor of the province of Ultima Thule. On his arrival there, he found the sum of ten thousand pounds in the treasury, without a definite object to expend it on. The

needs of the little province were many. It needed roads; and as continuous war had been the rule for more than a generation, it was supposed to need a highly organized militia to be ready for the next rupture of peace. But what this soldier decided that the raw, struggling province chiefly needed was not good roads, or a canal, or a trained citizen soldiery, or a complete survey of her unexplored domain, but college education on a new principle. It was a strange idea to find lodgment in the brain of a military man.

This was all the stranger, as Ultima Thule possessed one college already. The province had been given its essential character by the Tories who had been driven out of the Thirteen Colonies, when they set up for themselves. The first thing these exiled loyalists did was to provide for religion, literature, and education by ordaining a bishop, founding a monthly magazine, and establishing a college. On this last they imposed the model of Oxford, as they could not conceive of any better, or indeed of any other, system. One fine old crusted Tory, an Oriel man, by the way, insisted upon the Laudian statutes going into force. These enjoined on all students residence within the college, attendance at chapel as a matter of course, subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles on entrance and on receiving a degree, and abstinence from seditious meetings and dissenting conventicles. The comedy of the situation

6 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

lay in the fact that the faithful, who were entitled to the privileges of higher education, were few, and that the college was supported by public money drawn from the pockets of those very dissenters who were excluded from it by the constitution of the college.

It was not a military problem, but the soldier-governor solved it by creating a new college based on the broad principle of "toleration." No religious test was to be demanded of either professors or students; the classes were to be open to all sects and confessions; there was no provision for residence; students were free to lodge where they pleased; the townsman or the military officer might pay his fee and attend a single course of lectures without the restraints of a discipline designed for boys. Instead of being planted in a small country town, the new college was to be in the capital, in the centre of things, thus anticipating the modern rule for the most desirable location of seats of learning. The new institution was to be in fact a little Edinburgh, as its rival was a little Oxford. So the forces were set in array over against each other, and the battle was joined. On the one side the aristocratic ideal, conservative, exclusive; on the other, the democratic ideal, liberal, comprehensive. Nearly a century has passed, the battle has been long and hard; but the victory of the liberal idea is decisive and overwhelming. Even the conservative college has been forced to accept it.

LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE 7

For endowment of the new college, the governor advised the use of the unexpended ten thousand pounds in the military chest. So the college was founded by a soldier with money taken in war, and it had to fight for its life. It is not strange that in due time such a college should bring forth soldiers and have a war record. *Fundator noster* was a small man physically; his title was the Earl of Lyttil, being the ninth bearer of that distinction; and so it was all in a concatenation accordingly that the institution he founded should be known as the Lyttil College, as it is unto this day. All the alumni are proud to be known as Lyttilites and to wear the ancient cognizance of the noble earl, an eagle, proper, displayed, on a field argent.

Dolcefar, the capital of Ultima Thule, was founded as a naval and military station to counterpoise another colonial city of "our sweet enemy France," a strong city, once, of ten thousand inhabitants, which has been a ruin, where fishermen dry their nets, for more than a hundred years. Seated beside her wonderful triple harbour, the provincial capital was laid out by military engineers in accordance with the mediæval idea of a fortified town. It must be compact for the greater ease of defence. In the very centre was a square which is known to this day as the "Grand Parade." Here the ancient British Grenadiers were mustered and drilled; here guard was mounted daily with stately ceremony; here

8 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

the early provincial laws were published by the provost-marshal after notice by beat of drum. For a century and more it was the heart of the quaint provincial town, always full of colour and movement. And here was built the first home of the Lyttil College. It was not a large building, but a certain simple, austere dignity was impressed — who knows how? — upon the stone and mortar. Some Scottish architect made the college as Scottish in character as its founder.

There was one great day to be marked for evermore with white in the calendar of the Lyttil College, the day the corner-stone was laid of the old building. In the early nineteenth century, the mediæval instinct and capacity for pageants had not yet died out; and it was still possible to make a civic function picturesque and impressive. This was a grand occasion. The red-coats, with colours flying and music playing, made a lane from Government House to the Parade, through which passed in stately procession His Excellency the Governor, accompanied by the civil magistrates, his glittering staff, and a train of army and naval officers in scarlet and blue and gold. The grandmaster of the Masons met the procession at the southeast angle of the low, rising walls. Christian prayers were said, the stone was lowered into its appointed place, and duly tapped with a silver trowel in the hand of the noble earl. Then coins were deposited in the cavity, which was thereafter

sealed by the identical brass plate which is preserved in the present library of the Lyttil College. Symbolic corn and wine and oil were poured over the stone in pagan libation, fine speeches were made, and then the good people dispersed and left the new seminary for the higher branches of learning to struggle for existence.

For more than forty years the history of the Lyttil College was the history of a building. These were its Dark Ages, during which, except for one brief interval, it was used for every possible purpose except the one for which it was designed. A museum, a debating-club, a mechanics' institute, a post-office, a music-master and his pianos, an infant school, an art club, a hospital, and a pastry-cook's shop all found shelter at different times beneath its hospitable roof. The post-office had quarters there for years and paid a goodly rent, but the infants' school, the mechanics' institute, and the museum got house-room free. The imagination is taken with the tale of the art club, as related by an original member, a gentleman of the old school, who wore a neckcloth and was in his heyday in the thirties of the nineteenth century. It consisted of about twenty ladies and gentlemen from the town and garrison, who united for the cultivation of painting, and it was by no means a mere pretense or a refuge for fashionable idlers. Indeed, the productions of the old gentleman's brush, which used to hang on the walls of his low-ceilinged

study, amply confirmed his words. The governor, a Waterloo veteran, himself an artist of no mean ability, was the president of the club as long as it lasted. Every spring these daring amateurs gave a public exhibition of their work.

It must have been a very pleasant club; the old gentleman's recollections of it were rose-coloured. The members were chosen with the greatest care, the patron was the King's representative and held a little court in Government House. Between the lights, when it was impossible to work, the pretty girls and titled ladies organized impromptu dances, for there was a piano in one of the rooms and orderlies were always in attendance to shift the easels and the stools. It lasted three years, but in the fourth there was no show of pictures in May, no aristocratic patron, no society. That was the terrible cholera year, when the air was thick with the smoke of tar-barrels burning on every street-corner to stay the plague, and the fear of sudden, agonizing death stared every one in the face. The Lyttil College was turned into a hospital; and instead of painting officers and dancing Lady Marys, the rooms were crowded with ghastly sufferers and their helpless, terrified attendants. The ambulance, with its green cotton hood, was always busy, bearing the smitten to the wards, or taking corpses away for hasty burial. As many as eighteen dead bodies would be carried out of a sultry August morning beneath

LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE 11

the pompous Latin inscription on the three stone slabs surmounting the doorway.

In due time the Dark Ages came to an end, and the Renaissance of the Lyttil College followed, as spring follows winter. Various attempts had been made to operate the college as a college, but they ended in failure, and the governors were forced time and again to close its doors and "allow the funds to accumulate." This sad period is one wearisome tale of incompetency, detraction, plot, counterplot, petty provincial jealousies, legislative stupidities, and faction fights. If a college could be killed by mismanagement, negligence, and spite, the Lyttil College would now be only a name on a grave-stone. But the liberal idea outlived its enemies. At last a few wise strong men, who believed that union was strength, rallied warring sects to its support, and set it definitely on its feet. The reorganization merely expanded the original plan now nearly half a century old; and since then the growth of the college has been steady and strong. Like all hitherto discovered colleges, it suffers from lack of funds. At one time, the statistical don proved beyond a doubt that at a given date the college must close its doors. But just in the nick of time the Benefactor made his appearance. He was an expatriated provincial who was making a fortune in the neighbouring republic. He endowed professorships and offered bursaries and scholarships to promising students.

12 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

Such munificence had never been known before in the country. His example was followed by other wealthy men, whose gifts established the Lyttil College firmly and for ever. There was no more talk of closing doors. The college grew in numbers, strength, and reputation. Soon the old building grew too small for the students and a new site had to be sought on an old camping-ground freckled with the circles where bell-tents had stood. The prophets declared that at last the Lyttil College had found an ample and final home. Within twenty years it has outgrown its present domicile, and has been forced to find another. On the outskirts of Dolcefar, a large estate has been bought and a building scheme covering fifty years has been mapped out. The Lyttil College deserves its name no longer. By a strange coincidence the new site was once the property of the very graduate of Oxford who, by forcing his obnoxious restrictions on the old college, made the Lyttil College possible. It still bears the name of his family seat in England. Thus does the whirligig of time bring in its revenges.

II

When the Lyttil College experienced its Renaissance, new-fangled notions of education were not in the air. It seemed a natural thing that learning should be under clerical control; and no one had thought of questioning

the value of classics and mathematics as the indispensable basis of all mental training. Classics and mathematics were the twin pillars of the Lyttil College's old curriculum, and the two scholars from Dublin and from Aberdeen who professed those subjects gave the place standards, tradition, reputation. If such a statement seems too pretentious in the case of an unknown "seminary for the higher branches of learning," it must be remembered that several thousands of Lyttilites have sojourned within its walls and regard it with feelings that are worth considering, such as affection, respect, and admiration. The men who could implant such feelings in generation after generation of their disciples are also worth considering, especially as they were the last of their race. Later ages should be told what they were like. Neither the Lyttil College nor any other will ever see the mate of the old professor of mathematics.

He was always old. When he died at his post after thirty-eight years' continuous service, the students buried him from the college and bore his coffin shoulder high to the grave. In his honour they produced a special number of the college paper, filled with tributes to his worth from those who knew and loved him. There were also pictures exhumed of him at various ages, and the very earliest seemed old. Something was due to the sedate clerical garb of his youth, something also to the natural gravity and strong North-country features, and

14 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

something to his high conception of the teacher's office. At the same time, he was always young; his mind never grew old. His genial spirits never suffered decay. Until the end, his humour and his somewhat caustic wit brightened the dullest meeting of the *Senatus Academicus*. Far on in life, he kept up his old athletic habits, spending his vacations beside his favourite trout stream, although the fish were strangely few and hard to capture in the later years. When his step became very heavy and slow, he would still, with a smile, maintain himself in case to dance the Highland fling.

He was a man of varied accomplishments; and perhaps he did not underestimate his skill in any one of them. An assiduous brother of the angle, a scientific exponent of long whist, a solver of chess problems, a performer on the flute, at his own parties, he professed himself capable of giving academic instruction on all these branches of learning. Mathematics were, of course, his pastime, but he was equally proficient in classics. At one time he made a practice of opening the first class in the morning with a Latin prayer of his own composition; he would turn nonsense verses into Virgilian hexameters for the amusement of a younger colleague; he was ready to converse with a French priest whom he met on his travels, or with a like-minded don in the tongue of Cicero for hours at a time. When he went a-fishing, he was wont to put a Greek play in

LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE 15

his pocket. Once, when the Professor of the More Humane Letters broke his leg while skating, and was housed for weeks, the Professor of Mathematics conducted his classes in Greek and Latin with great applause. When at the last he was suddenly struck down in the little house where he lived alone with one servant, friends coming in to care for him found on the study-table his well-worn Greek Testament, open at the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John.

Once a priest, always a priest. The old professor began his career as a minister of the Kirk of Scotland; and in his early days at the Lyttil College he was in constant demand as a preacher. Composed slowly, with great care, scholarly, fresh, and delivered with a studied elocution, his discourses always drew together attentive congregations in Dolcefear. As he grew older, he became more lax, or more advanced, whichever you please. His last sermon was delivered in the Universalist chapel; he designedly omitted grace before meals; and he had even been seen of a Sabbath morning making casts in a likely pool, — “Just for a specimen,” as he explained. A farewell discourse in the kirk on the text, “Shall he find faith on the earth?” caused something of a sensation among the orthodox; but its mild heresies would rank their author now-a-days in the extreme wing of the conservatives. His

16 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

repute as a public lecturer was equally high. The news that he was to speak would always fill a hall. On such themes as "A Trip to the Moon," he was inimitable. Humorous, droll, sly, pawky, moving from point to point somewhat heavily and slowly, he really had the secret of combining amusement and instruction. He had his own quaint phrases which stuck in the memory and raised the laugh.

On his real strength he did not pride himself nearly so much as on his accomplishments. He was a great teacher. He shone in the classroom. He had left the university with the pleasing conviction that mathematics was a science in which no further progress could be made, and that he had conquered the whole domain. Backed by this confidence, he inevitably assumed a lordly air towards his subject, which impressed his students profoundly. But he really knew his subject, and he had a genius for teaching. A genuine gift for exposition, for making things clear was in part the secret of his power. Over and over the same rules, the same elementary conceptions, he went for nearly forty years, without tiring of them himself. There was always a batch of fresh recruits to be moulded for the old campaign; and he enjoyed to the last giving them their drill and putting them through their facings. The Lyttlites liked the discipline themselves, for the old professor had a way with

him. His tongue had a razor edge which usage could not dull; but never were sarcasms delivered with such a beaming, affectionate, paternal, contradictory smile. The victim might suspect himself complimented and the laughter of his fellows a roar of applause. The old professor was by no means impartial; he had his favourites and his butts. Some few never forgave his persecutions; but the vast majority admired, feared, loved him. He was the favourite professor; his was the popular class. The first question an old Lyttelite put to the newcomer from the college was, "How 's Charlie?" Whenever the graduates foregather, endless stories are told of his *dictes et gestes*. They will furnish forth a whole evening's entertainment. His pet phrases, his mannerisms, like his cough for emphasis before implanting the sting of an epigram, were famous. In short, the old professor was a character, the last of the dominies. He taught until within five days of his death.

III

The young (or new) professor was the pupil of the old professor. He was made by him, admired him, was like him, and was unlike him. Entering college at an uncannily early age, he soon shot to the front as a lad of parts. Nurtured on the classics and mathematics, he nevertheless showed his bent for the study

of nature and his capacity for research which has since made him famous. Specialization marked him for her own. A scholarship gave him the means to study abroad and he learned what the universities of the old world, and particularly of Germany, could teach him. Then, with his foreign degree, he came back to serve the Lyttil College.

His point of view was at the opposite pole from his master's. The special science of which he became a devotee was an infinite book of secrecy in which the wisest could spell out only a word or two here and there. To take all learning for his province, to think of the subject he professed as made, and not in the process of making, to have time for accomplishments, for leisurely vacations, for games, or for reading outside his branch of science seemed to the new professor beneath the practice of a reasonable creature. He was a handsome, fiery little man, with dark auburn hair, eyes of the same colour, and an energetic nose. He walked with rapid, disproportionate strides, — a sure sign, say close observers, of ambition. He was ambitious; he aimed at making contributions to his science; but the tools ready to his hand were few and poor. The laboratory of the Lyttil College was practically a desert. The luxurious shining toys which are provided so lavishly for some professors to play with were not to be thought of. There was no money

for such things. So the new professor made his own apparatus, with which he investigated and researched and studied and made his discoveries, which he communicated to various learned journals in his specialty. He laboured terribly, day and night, summer and winter, term-time and vacation. For him a holiday in the country meant taking his work with him. A bathe in the sea, an afternoon's tramp, were the useful relaxations, refreshing for a renewal of his toil. Other interests fell away; he became that essential product of modern conditions, — the specialist.

It would not be fair to call him a narrow specialist. He was eager to impart as well as to acquire; he lived for his pupils as well as for his science, and so the lucky Lyttil College had on its staff two real teachers at the same time, representing the old school and the new. Though the old professor and the new professor remained friends, admiring each other greatly, they came into conflict in the meetings of the *Senatus*. The old professor was in favour of prescription, the new professor advocated more freedom; other new professors rallied to his side, and by degrees the Lyttil College was modernized in curriculum and administration. Ready, keen, vehement in debate was the new professor, combative as a game-cock, but careful always to observe the rules of the game. For all the years of his appointment, he supplied the motive

power of the institution. He was fond of the Lyttil College and lived for it, although his talents called him to a wider field of opportunity; and he listened to the call.

His reputation grew and grew. Out of his empty laboratory he produced learned paper after learned paper which made him known far beyond the boundaries of his province. He took part in a war of theories which agitated the upper air of the scientific Olympus, in which he fought not without glory. And he had his reward. He was received into that ancient society to which all scientific men aspire and had the right to place certain three letters after his name. A position in a famous university followed; and the Lyttil College lost her most distinguished alumnus for ever. At last he had obtained his desire; but he had spent the best part of his life in the service of his *alma mater*, and his eyes were moist the day he said good-bye to the college and his colleagues. Beyond the sea he is the same tireless worker that he was in the days of his provincial obscurity; and he has left his mark upon the ancient and famous university, which reckons so many great names in the long roll of its professoriate.

IV

One great advantage of a little college is that the teacher may come to know his pupils. They, in turn,

profess to believe that this personal contact is a benefit to them, and this pleasing theory makes it hard for the teacher to retain his needful humility. There can be no manner of doubt that the teacher and his teaching profit thereby. When the college grows in population, this desirable intercourse comes to an end, inevitably; mere arithmetic intervenes; that there are only twenty-four hours in the day renders this possibility of mutual acquaintanceship a dream. To the professor with large classes, his students are simply a mosaic of young faces in the lecture-room, an alphabetical list of names against which to set marks for examination or returns of attendance. He loses touch; his influence and his power as a teacher are bound to suffer. The equation remains one-sided. He may not know his students, but his students know him. He need not flatter himself that there is anything unknown about him. Every day is a day of judgment. Every day he is subjected to the pitiless scrutiny of a hundred or more very clear young eyes which serve active brains, intent on plucking the heart out of his mystery. Not a slip, not a foible, not a weakness, not a mannerism passes without remark, comment, analysis. Their judgments do not err on the side of lenity; they see only one side of the man, and perchance there are possibilities in the direst pedagogue which function outside the classroom, and

which, if known, might soften the harsh justice of impetuous and uncharitable youth.

Sheer numbers prevent the professor in a large institution from knowing his pupils. In the little college, he deals not with educational units, but with individual young human beings each with a history of his own. In this he has a great advantage over the other learned professions, which deal chiefly with grown people and set characters. The clergyman sees human nature at its best, the lawyer at its worst, and the doctor, in pain, sickness, and decay. But the teacher is dealing with humanity in its age of hope, "when everything seems possible, because everything is untried." His work lies full in the agitated mid-current of young life. He must be, indeed, stolid and self-centred, who can remain unaffected by its generous motions. Age may vaunt its sad superiority of wisdom; but youth is the age of idealism, of aspiration, of virtue. The true teacher should never grow old, for he lives, as does no other, with the young. In his heart there should be an eternal May.

Because Ultima Thule has diverse elements in its population, and because for generations provincials have followed the sea, a professor of the Lyttil College, in meeting his freshman class for the first time, confronts a mass of collective experience Ulyssean in its quality and range. This boy was born in his

father's ship off Bombay; the earliest recollection of this quiet girl is being taken ashore during a "norther" at Valparaiso. This young man has seen knives drawn and men drop on a pier-head at Rio. Even if they themselves have not sailed the Spanish Main or gone down by the Horn, their fathers, brothers, or other blood-kin have been seafarers and have come home from deep-sea voyages with tales of strange lands on their lips. These youths gathered here for the sake of book-learning have all their undervalued lore of life. They have sailed boats single-handed on lonely seas; they have hunted the bear and moose; they have known the perils of the forest, the ocean, the mine. They have endured the varied and exacting labour of the husbandman throughout the changing year. They have been brought face to face with reality. Not a few have already taken degrees in the rugged school of privation, and are at college solely through their own powers of self-denial and self-help. Very often, as in the fairy-tales, it is the youngest son who is given his chance by the hard-working elder brothers and sisters who stay at home on the farm and join forces to support the lad of parts. Descendants of French peasants and of out-wanderers from the pleasant Rhine country are to be found in the Lyttil College, still manifesting the characteristics of their forebears; but its chief strength is recruited from

three districts settled by clansmen from the Highland hills. Respect for the minister and the dominie, for learning and education, runs in their blood. In such conditions, the teacher's problem is simplicity itself. He does not have to coax and coddle and dry-nurse a set of pulpy, or indifferent, or *blasé* youngsters into meeting a minimum of college requirements for a degree. His pupils are already men in will, determined to know and eager to learn. The teacher's only task is to be sure of himself and to feed his disciples with solid food. To such pupils the teacher owes the homage of respect; he may count himself fortunate if he obtains theirs in return.

Though there is a decorative fringe of young women, and though many of them become good students and all work with conscience, the Lyttil College is essentially a man's college. Men do things. Every autumn, the professor confronts a fresh array of strange young faces. In the formative quadrenniad that follows, he comes to know something of the character and history each face and name represent. Then they pass, in the curious phrase, out into the world. The next thing their old teacher knows they are wagging their heads at him in the pulpit and telling him all his sins, or they are winning higher degrees in foreign universities, or acquiring fortunes with bewildering rapidity, or making books of learning and repute, or conferring

with him as undoubted equals in points of scholarship, or leading political parties, haranguing constituents and making laws in various little senates, or moulding public opinion through the press and dealing with matters of life and death. In short, they are doing men's work in the world, and their whilom preceptor finds it hard to readjust the focus of his spectacles, through which he views them and their achievements. Yesterday they were boys, *in statu pupillari*, and boys they remain, let him do his best, in the professor's eyes, to the end of the chapter. A few years of such experience will lead the most superior and light-minded young professor to see a sound reason for the practice of Comenius; and he will uncover mentally whenever he enters into the presence of his freshmen. He will become impressed with the magnitude and the solemnity of his task; he may even realize that his office is essentially a religious one, and, remembering the custom of the old professor, he will feel like beginning each lecture by signing himself, *in nomine Domini*.

The Lyttil College is no impossible Eden fenced off by adamantine walls against the assault of evil. Tragedy forces its way in. Death, disgrace, sin, crime, insanity, moral degradation occur from time to time, to remind us we are in this present world, to sadden and to overawe. Dark shadows are inevitable.

In hundreds of youths assembled year after year at one educational centre by some mysterious law of natural selection, there shall not fail to be included a few of the baser sort; but these are the rare exceptions. Nowhere is the moral atmosphere purer than in a college. When we think of the slipshod ethics of middle life, its love of ease and compromise, its cowardice, its evasions, and of the impotence of old age for good or evil, we must conclude that virtue is with youth. Lyttilites have their faults, but they present a high average of character. A college develops the brotherly spirit of the regiment and the ship; and these collegians are good to one another. They care for their sick in hospital; there are cases of a scholarship resigned in favour of a less fortunate classmate. Some attain the moral height called heroism. There was one honest-faced, quiet boy who dived three times for the fellow bather who had sunk at his side. Three times he dived in determined effort, and the third time he did not come to the surface. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." There was another lad of fair hopes and great promise. He was mortally hurt in a game, and his first word after the accident was to clear his opponents of blame. Of such deeds are the Lyttilites capable.

The usual prizes of life — wealth, fame, place —

do not come the teacher's way. He is vowed to academic poverty, which he embraces gladly for the sake of the compensatory freedoms. He knows that he is scorned by the man of the world and the man of affairs as an unpractical recluse; but he is also aware that not infrequently a measure of envy mingles in their scorn. Learned leisure, the friendship of books, the golden mediocrity of fortune, are often regarded wistfully by those who are quite unfitted to enjoy them. And though the college pedagogue is conscious of being pursued through life by the half-contemptuous, half-envious pity of the successful, and though he may be tempted at times to wish for more of this world's goods as a member of a society in which money is the measure of all things, his regrets are never long-lived. He has his compensations. Of these, the chief is merely that he should not be forgotten by those he has taught. A visit on the eve of departure for a foreign shore, or on return from travel, a book to his taste, a Christmas greeting, some little token from the other side of the world after years have flown, civil wedding cards, announcements of birth, rare letters which are never destroyed, a word of thanks or gratitude for what he has tried to do, — these insignificant, elusive things make up the teacher's hidden riches and render him more than content with his little house, his modest table, and his shabby, book-lined

28 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

study. A wise man has declared, "We live by admiration, hope, and love."

V

All the activities of the Lyttil College are pent up within four walls and under one roof. There is no residence or (suggestive word) dormitory. The students lodge where they please throughout the town, Scottish fashion; and the one building is used solely for the purposes of instruction. It contains two little libraries, five little laboratories, besides little classrooms, offices, and other accommodations, — a marvel of concentration. No charm of architecture invests it. The Lyttil College looks as utilitarian as a red-brick factory, as ugly and gaunt as poverty joined with ignorance could make it. And yet these incredible Lyttilites idealize the monstrous fabric and grow lyrical in honour of its one passable feature, the "old red tower," the antiquity of said tower being some score of years. Some avoid revisiting the place after graduation because it awakens a curious homesickness. Others make a point of coming back with wife and child, as on a pilgrimage. The most remote send affectionate inquiries about the dear ugly place from the ends of the earth, for they see it still through the rose-coloured mists of youth and enthusiasm.

LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE 29

The session is old-fashioned and well-nigh unique. It lasts for eight months, with very few breaks, and then comes a long vacation of a full third of the year. That is the division of time. The session is a period of intense activity followed by a period of intense repose. If the college looks like a factory outside, it is a beehive within, humming with intellectual activity. The sacred hours are from ten to one in the morning. The visitor who traverses the corridors then hears the voices of various lecturers beating through the general stillness, with now and then a burst of applause or Kentish fire, for one of the Lyttlites' most cherished privileges is the right to cheer their professors, ironically or with good will. The custom has its uses: it corresponds to the custom of having markers at the targets to show what shots get home; and it is not abused. At five minutes to the hour a bell rings, and the staircases and corridors are suddenly filled with the tramp of feet and the noise of many voices coming, going, intermingling in their passage from classroom to classroom. The self-determining tides of young humanity find their different goals; the tumult ceases, silence reigns once more, broken only by the booming of the lecturer's voice. There are always readers in the one large room on the ground floor with windows looking to the south, and labourers in the laboratories. The college motto is "*Ora et labora*";

30 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

and there is a determined effort to carry into effect the second command, at least. Inspection would hardly find a single room in the building without its corps of workers from morn till eve. The Lyttil College is a working college. The casual drones are soon detected and put out of the hive.

And yet it would be a mistake to think of the Lyttlites as a set of spectacled young mandarins. They are hearty youths who know how to play as well as work; and not seldom are the best scholars the foremost athletes. Their one game is an old-fashioned variety of football; and they are famed for their prowess in it. An ancient town-and-gown rivalry with a local club gives the keenest edge to competition. The annual contests in October are Homeric. During that month both town and college go mad over the game. A series of struggles for a costly hideous silver "trophy" has continued for years, with trumpets of victory, groans of defeat. On match days the grassy arena of the athletic ground is lined thick with excited, vociferous partisans, to cheer the gladiators on. In all the throng there is no keener onlooker than the reverend head of the Lyttil College himself; he has never been known to miss a match, rain or shine. Most of the staff attend also, or if not, they are busy at golf, or quoits, or boating. In the winter they pursue the antique Scottish sport of curling. No one can

accuse the Lyttil College of neglecting the body in its cultivation of the mind.

Vacation comes with the cold rains of the bleak Norland spring. The fever of the annual, mechanical testing called examination has spent itself; the last diploma has been signed in the dusty, littered library, the last excited conference of the *Senatus* has been held, and the hurry-flurry of Commencement Day is over for a year, to the unspeakable relief of the head and all the staff. For Commencement Day is somewhat saturnalian in character, and the demure Lyttillites reward themselves for eight months' decorum by what might appear to the uninitiated outsider as a dangerous riot. Songs, cheers, chaff, shouts, jokes, personalities from the students' gallery enliven the orderly "proceedings," and the professors are baited freely, to the huge delight of all but the victims. Then the Lyttillites disperse to the four winds of heaven. Very few are able to spend the vacation in idleness. The majority must employ their leisure in finding money for the next session's expenses. They have various ways of making money, which they do not care to discuss, never considering, perhaps, that the experience so gained may prove as valuable as the book-learning acquired in the classroom. They carry on the fine old tradition which unites learning with narrow means.

32 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

In vacation, the Lyttil College is empty and lonely, like a rock on the sand when the tide has ebbed far away. "All the bloomy flush of life is fled." Silence reigns in the dusty classrooms and the long corridors. Only now and then a solitary professor lets himself into the library with his private key to borrow a book; but he does not stay long. His footsteps echo strangely loud in the vacant halls. Outside, the vine in the reëntrant of the central tower, which looks in the winter like a map of the Amazon and its tributaries, resumes its leisurely green escalade of our walls. Up it has crept storey by storey, and in time its triumphant banners will flutter above our battlements. In midsummer, it forms a wavering green arras, which ruffles and sways in the wind. In autumn, the leaves turn all hues of crimson and copper, most glorious to see. Now, the single retainer of the establishment, a veteran of the Great Mutiny, emerges from his winter burrow in the furnace-room for the annual house-cleaning. He is an absolute factotum, being stoker, parlor-maid, carpenter, mason, gardener all in one. He and his wife, an old campaigner, have their "quarters," as he calls them, in a corner of the basement. A reminiscence of barrack life is the plain plank bed without mattress or blanket, on which he stretches himself between watches. Indoors, he sweeps and dusts and paints and creates a strong atmosphere of

common soap. Then he sallies forth with rake and hoe to put the walks in order. The grass grows high and is never cut or mowed; but a curly-headed old Kerry man grazes his seven fine cows roundabout, which adds a pastoral touch to the academic scene. An occasional tourist invades the vacation stillness, or an old graduate revisits *alma mater*, with his little boys in his hand. Happy is he if he encounters one of his old professors in the building and can chat about college affairs. And so season follows season, the years slip away, and the little college which is not a building, or a staff of teachers, or a body of students, or all combined, but a spiritual ideal, strikes its roots deeper into all hearts concerned with it.

VI

If it savours of impertinence to assert that the Lyttil College has a history, it must seem the empty vaunt of a fanatical admirer to rank it as a world power. But this is the sober truth. The Lyttil College does verily reach out its hands to the ends of the earth and sway men and events. Consider the fact that it has trained several hundred ministers of the Christian religion, who have now for many years been preaching to congregations of faithful men all the world over. Some have become missionaries to the heathen, and

carry the Lyttil College in their hearts to India, China, and the islands of the sea. Almost as great is the number of secular teachers, who have devoted themselves to the task of instructing the youth of the province, and to a less extent, of the Dominion. Not a few have reached the rank of professors in full-blooded universities and have attained modest eminence in the scholastic world. They are all proud to attribute their success to the training they received within the walls of the Lyttil College. But for it, they must have remained unenlightened to the end of their days. Besides, not a few of our lawmakers, judges, and public men who form opinion by means of the press were made what they are by the Lyttil College. The aggregate of such influence wielded by so many Lyttilites in so many directions must be incalculable. Then, as befits a college founded by a soldier with money taken from the enemy, it has a war record. In '85, Lyttilites went to the front at the call of the country and endured the hardships of campaigning, without the rewards and glories of actual fighting. Again, in '99, when the Mother Country called on her children for aid, five Lyttilites were found in the first force of fighting men sent by the Dominion to the seat of war. One company was commanded by a Lyttilite, and it so fell out that when the regiment made a desperate night attack, and the

order was given to "retire," a Lyttilite corporal questioned the word as it came to him in the thick darkness amid the devil's racket of the fusillade, and did *not* pass it on. Consequently the one company with the quiet Lyttilite captain held its ground desperately within sixty paces of the enemy's trenches, till day broke and the white flag was hoisted over the huge river camp. After the war, the Lyttilites brought back two large *vierkleurs* to the college. The trophies hang in the library above the portrait of the founder. After the war, four Lyttilite girls were chosen to go out and teach the children of the conquered. So it is plain that the Lyttil College has meddled with affairs of the first magnitude, not without glory. The Lyttil College is a world power. Every little college is a world power.

But the Lyttil College is a thing of the past. It has outgrown its second home and entered upon a much greater inheritance. Ample grounds await the next development. Generous friends have overwhelmed the Lyttil College with their gifts. Splendid plans are being made and executed for stately buildings, suitable equipment, sufficient endowment. Cinderella has blossomed into the princess of a fairy-tale. But one thing is certain, she cannot be more beloved in her prosperity than when she was unknown and poor.

LITTLE COLLEGE GIRLS

LITTLE COLLEGE GIRLS

ALTHOUGH our college is a small one and little famous, it is still the chiefest in the well-known province of Ultima Thule. It was founded early in the last century; and though our numbers be few and our housing unlovely, there are those that believe in our little college, admire it, love it. Some twenty years ago, certain ambitious girls signified their desire to attend it. The staff, the governors made no objection; the girls came; one married within the year, the other crowned a full course with a good degree; other girls have been coming ever since. I have been young and am now old. I have had some hundreds of the college girl, as bred in these parts, under observation, and I have arrived at definite conclusions regarding her.

The popular imagination is a romantic thing. It transformed the meddlesome old woman in Southey's tale of the three bears into the picturesque and mischievous Goldilocks. And it has created an impossible ethereal being, all good looks and good clothes, who subsists on caramels, and floats gracefully through her courses until she becomes one in a bevy

of "sweet girl graduates with their golden hair." This is labelled "the college girl," and is exactly the kind of doll that great baby, the public, loves to play with.

The reality is very different. The Canadian college girl, as I know her, is an earnest young person, who is not carried to the skies of academic distinctions on flowery beds of ease. She knows the meaning and the value of hard work, with small leisure for frivolity of any kind. She may be an infant of sixteen, fresh from school, with her frock at her ankle and her hair in a "club," or she may be a mature woman, who may well have prepared her classmate for matriculation, or a city girl of means, with time on her hands, who takes a class or two because she wants to improve herself; but they all alike learn to work, and shun to be idle. More of our girls have taken honours in mathematics than in any other departments; but this may be due to the climate; the popular opinion is that the kind of head that grows in Ultima Thule is particularly hard and strong.

Outwardly the life of the college girl is rather neutral-tinted. She comes from the country and finds a boarding-house for herself, where she exists in more or less discomfort. Her work is attending lectures; her diversions are church and the meetings of the two college societies for girls, a rare party, or

a college "at home." She gives her days to lectures, does not dream of cutting even the dulllest, and her nights to study. Outwardly, it is not an attractive life; but every now and then comes a hint of how those who live it look upon it, — a letter from the ends of the earth, a rarity for the museum, some books for the library, a picture for a classroom, a visit of an old student to his former haunts. The secret is that youth is the season of romance, and that within our homely walls the inner life of the intellect is kindled or fanned to brighter flame, that tinges all about it with the colour of the rose. The young people get here something that they value, call it awakening, education, point of view, mental attitude, or what you will.

We have no "problem" in our little college. The young women sit at lectures with the young men; they read in the library and work in the laboratory together. They wear streamers of the college colours at the football matches, encouraging the gladiators by their presence at the celebration of their victory as well as at the actual contest. But they are neither rivals with the youths, nor, to the acute observer, unduly friendly. The young men will open the door of a classroom for them and allow them to go out first; but there is no open flirtation. There was once a girl who came to the college for fun, and who had

usually two or three youths about her, engaged in sparkling conversation. Her fate was strikingly appropriate; she married a minister. I have seen her since her marriage and her spirits have not abated. It must, however, be admitted that our college is, somehow or other, a matrimonial bureau, — a school for husbands and wives. Our graduates show a very amiable propensity to marry within the family, so to say. In spite of lectures, examinations, and all the stress of intellectual effort, the old puzzle regarding the way of a man with a maid persists here as elsewhere.

The god of love, a! *benedicite*,
How mighty and how great a lord is he!

There must be a good deal of question and answer; the lasses must get their dues of courting, but public opinion decrees that it must not be done on the premises. A few lines in the newspaper, or occasional wedding cards, or the gossip of an old student, tell the faculty all they ever know of these affairs. The freaks of mating are as curious here as elsewhere; as when a stalwart football player chooses a quiet little slip of a girl, who looks as if a breath of wind would blow her away, and carries her off to Christianize the heathen at the other side of the world.

In other words, the relations between the young

men and maidens are right and pleasant, as our girls find when they compare notes with their friends in other colleges. They discover that they have been treated with a courtesy and consideration not invariably accorded to girls at college. Part of the credit is due to the young men; but most to the young women themselves. They come from Puritan homes, where religion is a reality. They are good girls. As I sit alone in the long afternoons, in my eyrie that overlooks the sea, there comes at twilight, down the deserted corridor, the sound of girlish voices upraised in a hymn; and, in the silence that follows, I know that they are praying. This exercise is not prescribed in the curriculum, but it forms no small part of their education, and, I imagine, of others. The college girls take their share of church work, sometimes to the detriment of their studies and standing, or they find time in the midst of heavy honour courses for works of mercy among the needy at their own door.

Let no one infer from the last remark but two or three that our girls lack their share of comeliness, of the essential charm of girlhood. Our classrooms have here and there a picture, though our decoration is meagre; but the best are the living pictures. "Praised be Allah," says the devout Arab, "who made beautiful women!" and even in Ultima Thule

he would often have such cause for thankfulness. The poor youths! they are so placed in the classroom that they can study only the rear view of various coiffures; but the lucky professor, by virtue of his office, may and must look his audience in the face, and if he dwells on the most attractive part of it, who shall blame him? The prevailing impression left on his mind is pinkish, for our Norland air is tempered by the sea, and sets a lasting rouge upon the cheek that has known it from childhood. Elsewhere on this continent the colour in the young girl's face is apt to be too faint. Tusitala would have liked our Ultima Thulians, for here the young maidens have "quiet eyes." As I think of them, a long procession of fresh faces passes before me;

I dream of a red-rose tree.

Jessica's face comes first, — a baby face, except for its earnest look, full, round, dimpled, in colour like a ripened peach. Jessica's eyes are blue, the blue of an April sky after rain, and her hair is wavy and fair. She looked soberly in class; but once she smiled when she thanked me for something she had learned, she said, from me. Jessica is a woman now, winning her bread by her own toil. I met her the other day, on my long walk, with a young man. They both had a happy, confidential air that pro-

claimed their relation as well as a placard. I think her days of independence are near an end.

Norah was true to her Celtic name and Celtic blood. Generously made, impulsive, hearty, ready with her tongue, her wit, her laugh, Norah in the classroom made stagnation impossible. She had a trick of blushing when she laughed, and her colour changed quickly. When she graduated, she was undecided between going on the stage and going into a convent; and she took the veil. I have seen her since. They have cut off her beautiful hair, and she wears the black habit and white coif of her order. Norah is her name no longer. I must call her Sister Theresita. But these changes do not go very deep. Sister Theresita is my old, hearty, impulsive Norah, perfectly happy in her new sequestered life, a power in the convent school, and still warmly interested in her old college.

All the Bellair sisters were pretty. They were all well made, and with a peculiarly graceful carriage. They came in a long succession, and though not famous as students, were most decorative in the class-room. Kate, the eldest, was a court lady in our Shakespearean revival, and she looked the part. Their cousin, Bonnibel, was girlishly slim, with brown eyes and ruddy brown hair. No more than a child when she entered college, she soon proved a

good student, patient, systematic, steady as the clock. Without overworking, but by simple faithfulness, she won her high honours, and she deserved them. Not yet content, she is working for a higher degree; but I am glad to notice that she is no longer as thin as she was. Her friend and classmate was called "the Little Duchess" by the Old Professor, from the way she queened it over the whole college. Every one liked her, and every one made demands upon her; and that was the trouble. There was too much for her to do in the twenty-four hours of each day, and, for a time, she was forced to retire from the field. Her disappointment was extreme, but she waited, and the laurels were ready for her when she came back. Like the other Maud, her little head ran over with curls.

But my procession is growing too long; still I must not forget Anita, who has Spanish eyes that dance when she dances. She is in part exotic, a flower of the tropics, strayed in our stern Northland. Phœbe was a staid country lass, of the wholesome English type, with smooth black hair, bright red cheeks, and brown eyes that looked black under sleek black brows and long black eyelashes. We had to break the news to Phœbe that she had won, by quiet, hard work, as great an honour as our little world has to offer. It was a complete surprise. Phœbe laughed

and blushed, and gasped "I?" in thorough incredulity. I have seen many a rosy dawn and sunset, but never any play of colour as fine as the come and go of the good red blood in Phœbe's face that day.

Neither our lads nor our lasses are weaklings. Half the college play football, and our champion team is a joy to behold. Di Vernon is as straight as a lance-shaft, and has swum across the bay and back. A six-mile tramp over country roads is no great feat for any of them. Many are daughters of sea-captains, and have seen, as children, those strange places all round the world, that are for most of us mere names in story-books. With this breeding, on or by the sea, they have gained character early. Janet spent her childhood in a lighthouse on a lonely island; her father has saved many a life; Flora remembers a "norther" on her father's ship in Valparaiso Harbor; Hannah's earliest recollection is of a strange man, who could speak no English, knocking at the door one stormy night, all faint and dripping from a recent wreck.

But they are not all strong. Alicia, my best scholar, was in my classes two years before I was able to identify her. She was a quiet, slight little woman, very shy and low-spoken. Her voice was never heard in class, which was a pity, for it was caressing, clear, and exquisitely modulated. Nearly

two years passed before I could connect the perfect papers bearing Alicia's name with the most silent, most attentive student in the room. When I did, our friendship began. There is much virtue in work, in mastering the knowledge that is worth knowing, in learning how to wield and handle it, in making it subserve noble ends. This was the stamp of Alicia's work; it was full of this virtue; but the chief charm was the character that showed itself unconsciously in all that work. Strength to endure, an unvarying sweet patience, the scholar's modest ambition and enthusiasm, a richness of gentle affection that radiates warmth on all about her, — these are Alicia. We are old friends now, but the years, as they pass, only give me better reasons for thinking well of her. Sorrow has come to her in many forms, one of the sorest being a long severance from her beloved books; but the fire has only made the gold finer. Mine is the opinion of all who know her. Her life is not one that most would choose; but it is neither without fruit nor without cheer. If only the jewel had not so frail a casket!

Honour was the best listener I ever had. Every speaker knows what I mean. The greater part of every class attends, and attends well; but once in a while you entertain an angel, in the shape of a hearer, who is specially interested, who never takes his

eye off you, who never misses a point, who is completely sympathetic.' Such a hearer was Honour. Her face was a telltale mirror of what was passing in her mind; every thought, every emotion made some change there. Her eyes were the fresh, well-opened eyes of a child, free from concealment, from self-consciousness, from any shade of unreality or affectation. Frank, proud, sensitive, alert, open as the day, Honour was also fair to see, a tall, straight girl who looked her best in her habit and on horseback; eyes, a Scottish grey-blue; a mouth like Brown-ing's Edith, the lips parting naturally and showing a little bit of two white strong teeth. And a pretty wit had Honour, a way of putting things all her own. Once we played a comedy of Shakespeare's, and Honour was our star. Shall we ever forget her brightness, patience, docility, unfailing good humour? Honour made the play, and left her friends a legacy of pleasant memories. Now she is happily married, and has gone to live in a far country. She writes that forget-me-nots grow thick in the Jhelum meadows; they grow also along the brooks of Ultima Thule.

Constance came up to college with strong health, excellent preparation, and a merry face. A way of turning her head on one side, like a bird, and a twist of her lips into a quizzical smile are what I remember her by. Students fix themselves upon the teacher's

memory by trick of personality, displaying itself in word, or gesture, or question. Some phrase, or attitude, or incident establishes the identification for ever. Many come and go like phantoms, impressing themselves in no way on the college memory; but Constance worked faithfully and cheerfully, earning the respect of the staff, moving in a brightness of her own making, and leaving behind her the after-glow of a rich and sunny nature. When she passed out of our halls for the last time, she little knew what was before her. Mercifully she did not. Constance was fated to be one of an English garrison besieged in a foreign city by the cruel yellow people. The first thing to do, after the investment began, was to write to the far-off friends and put the letters in the safe, so that *they* would know, in case the promised relief came too late. Other wise precautions were taken. At the ringing of a bell, all the women and children were to assemble in one place, if the foe broke in. But they were not to be allowed to fall into the hands of the torturers alive. These were among the possibilities our little college girl had to face through weeks of agony. Quenching fire under a sleet of bullets, and the pitiful mother's tragedy, when the long strain was over, — these things she has known, but neither she nor her friends will speak of them willingly as long as they live.

The college girl will play a part of increasing importance in the community; but as yet the community has done very little for the college girl, in Canada at least. Coeducation is a temporary makeshift, due to the national poverty. The time is coming when our women will have their education apart, when it will be shaped to their needs, capacities, tastes, and destiny. There is already such a college, where the students have grown from less than a score to over a thousand in its short lifetime of twenty-five years. It is in a beautiful country town, in a broad valley between ranges of serrated hills. The college is the result of a large plan intelligently carried out. The girls are not allowed to drift into casual boarding-houses, nor are they herded in huge dormitories. They live in little homes, ten or twenty together, under the care of one of the staff. There is a homelike air about the place that strikes the stranger at once. An ample gymnasium, a picture gallery, a library, a chapel where I saw the whole college at their orisons, classrooms, laboratories, hammocks under the apple trees about the tennis-courts, are among the more obvious provisions for the education of the lucky girls who can attend this college.

Our Canadian girls deserve as good treatment.

THE VANITY OF TRAVEL

THE VANITY OF TRAVEL

I

IN academic circles it is tacitly assumed that travel is an essential of education, or experience, or culture. On the aspirant for scholastic fame is laid the heavy necessity of having at least seen Germany. His ability to cap allusions to the Alps with modern instances from the Apennines and the river Po is taken for granted and reckoned as a necessary part of his learned luggage. The admission that he has not travelled is made with shame and confusion of face, or, if resolutely brazened out, with a secret sinking of the heart; and such admission is received with a lifting of the eyebrows, the rising inflection on "Indeed!" and, henceforward, a certain condescension on the part of the interlocutor. As Johnson said, "The man who has not been in Italy is always conscious of an inferiority, from his not having seen what a man is expected to see." Outside the schools and colleges, the same opinion prevails. In a cis-Atlantic community, one symptom of new-gotten wealth is the sudden flitting to Europe of Dives' womankind.

56 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

And yet, after his happy return from the grand tour, not only long desired and long prepared for, but enjoyed to the full under well-nigh ideal conditions, the thoughtful soul retires to his own roof-tree once more and ponders his gains. What has he in exchange for his outlay in time and money? What has been the reaction of his new experience upon the whole man? Has he added even the fraction of a cubit to his mental stature? Has he acquired that mysterious quality of "breadth," which travel is supposed to confer? Or can it be possible that the benefits accruing from travel have been overrated? May not this faith in the virtue of the modern pilgrimage be simply a newer kind of fetish-worship?

The value of travel as a means of culture must be overrated, because it is a matter of common remark that a man may traverse the five continents and come home as dull an ass, as complete a philistine, as rude an oaf, as when he started. On the other hand, home-bred folk who have hardly strayed from their birth-place may be thoughtful, well-read, humane, sympathetic, agreeable, charming. If broad sympathies, wide interests, fine character, gentle manners were impossible of attainment without wanderings in foreign parts, the world would be poor, indeed. An authentic case of conversion were greatly to be desired. If records existed to show narrow-minded persons becoming

broad-minded after travel, or churlish persons, courteous, or stupid persons, intelligent, the sceptic would be silenced. Observe your rich neighbours who enjoyed last summer for the first time the advantages of a trip to England. Listen to their instructive conversation. Do you notice any decided improvement in their mind, manners, or morals? Have they brought back with them much more than data regarding the weather and the hotel rates? In your pilgrimage through the world you will indeed be fortunate if you meet with a man of wider intellectual cultivation than Charles Lamb, the cockney in grain, who never travelled farther from his beloved London than to Margate, or to Mackery End in Hertfordshire. Samuel Johnson could spend weeks in France, could see portents like beautiful, doomed Marie Antoinette going hunting in the park at Versailles, and could discover nothing more important than that the French were an indelicate people because one footman used his fingers instead of the sugar-tongs.

Travel cannot be essential to culture. It would be like making a knowledge of the Scriptures in the original tongues essential to the Christian life. In spite of Cook and modern cheapness, travel is even now a luxury reserved for the few. Not every one may fare to Corinth. Only since the perfecting of steam transportation by land and sea has travel been possible

except for the very rich, or the very hardy. But strong men lived before Agamemnon, and true culture existed in many a century before the nineteenth. Duty, force of circumstances, want of pence may close foreign ports to you all your life long. Death may overtake you before you see St. Paul's cross shine over city and river, or the sun set beyond Janiculum, or the moon rise over Hymettus. But the world of books is never barred; the abysses of the starry sky and of your own mind always await your exploration, wherever your home may be. Life by itself is a strenuous cultivator of the soul, ploughing deep and harrowing and stirring to its very depths and watering with plentiful tears. What Carlyle called "the usual destinies" — our slow learning of so little, bread-winning, mating, birth of children, loss and gain, success and failure — these things which make the common lot, if rightly understood and wisely accepted, are culture of the best. If one were given the choice between early marriage and a year in Europe! And yet your prudent academic person will choose to know rather than to live, and defers matrimony until his *Entwickelung* has been sufficiently advanced by vacations and "sabbaticals" abroad. Then, in canny middle age, he looks about for the lass with the tocher.

Though such commonplace considerations must occur to every reflective mind, the tide of travel is

ever rising. In the summer season the ferry-boats of the Atlantic shift travellers by tens of thousands from the New World to the Old. Some are intent on business errands, some have fixed, educational aims, but the majority are travelling for the sake of the pleasure and profit obtainable from seeing sights. They are the tourists. They are the mainstay of continental hotels, pensions, and pleasure-resorts. They have made every nation in Europe as familiar with the Stars and Stripes as with that nation's own banner. They are to be seen driving through the streets of foreign capitals in strings of barouches, or hustled by guides through cathedrals, museums, and galleries, or "doing" the Alps and the Rhine with one eye on the scenery and the other on their Baedeker. They drift across the land in hordes. They are everywhere contemned and spoken against. Their initiated compatriot winds them afar and flees from their presence.

To despise a fellow mortal is always easy and rather cheap: "'T is not in folly not to scorn a fool"; but the universal attitude toward the tourist is not to be explained so readily. To understand the *pecore di Cook*, as the Italians call them, the tourists of all nations who bear the "mark of the beast" i. e., Baedeker, is somewhat harder than to repeat stale gibes. I wish I felt equal to the task.

Sight-seeing is the tourist's chief aim in travel, and

this incident illustrates his procedure. One July, a certain traveller tried on two different days to see "Mona Lisa" in the *Salon Carré* of the Louvre. Now, seeing a picture is a slow, complicated, and by no means easy process. In the first place, the light must fall right, that is, it must come from behind the spectator's back, or the picture is practically invisible. With the light right, it takes some time even for the one person out of every ten who is blessed with normal vision to make out the details of any picture. There is the work of picking out and then grouping and arranging forms and colours. The eye has to penetrate a sort of haze of half-seen things to get at the picture at all. The brain must be actively alert to assist the eye in perceiving what is before it. Any one who has ever taken a drawing-lesson knows the difference between seeing one cube set on another as a mere process of recognition and seeing the model as it really is, a relation of lights and shadows, planes and surfaces. The difference is incalculable. Having penetrated this haze, the spectator's eye has yet to receive æsthetic pleasure from the picture. In other words, the spectator must see the picture somewhat as the artist did. Unless he is able to share in some minute degree the artist's creative delight, he has not really seen the picture. He may have recognized it, or identified it, or have satisfied a thin curiosity about it,

but unless he has felt some thrill or throb, at least as warm as that excited by the prospect of dinner, he has not seen the picture. Seeing a picture in this sense demands just exactly the price the tourist will not pay; that is, time. No work of art yields up its secret readily. How can the average man fathom in a few seconds a design which it took genius weeks or months to elaborate?

The traveller found the centre of the *Salon Carré* fenced off by a flimsy railing (possibly for repairs), which made it impossible to get "Mona Lisa" in the right light. He was either too near or too far away, no matter how he edged along the barricade. If the floor space had been free, he could have shifted to the proper distance and angle from which to begin seeing Leonardo's masterpiece, but that unlucky railing was always in the way. He had to pass on at last, and solace himself with the marvellous detail and colour of "La Femme Hydropique." So, in spite of the best will in the world, he did not see "Mona Lisa;" and then she was spirited away.

During the half-hour he spent in vainly manœuvring for position, at least eighty persons passed between the railing and the picture. If each individual directed his eyes full upon the canvas for thirty seconds, it was the utmost time he devoted to it. He heard what the guide said, ticked off the title in

his Baedeker and passed on in procession to the next picture, and the next room, and so on through the Louvre. Even if the picture left some impression on the retina which was transmitted to the brain, it must have been at once overlaid, confused, blurred and blotted by the train of swift succeeding impressions. The capacity of the brain for receiving and retaining impressions is limited and the saturation point is soon reached.

It would appear, then, that the average tourist is continually defeated in the main object of his tour. He spends time and money and effort to see sights; and he does not see them. Little wonder then that the average tourist cannot be revered as wise. If he cannot even see his sights, the amount of education, experience, culture he derives from travel must be practically nil. If he receives pleasure, his face does not show it. Picture galleries are the nurseries of boredom and fatigue. Two remarks overheard that July day in the *Salon Carré* were "*Das ist billig auch*," from a plump little *Hausfrau*, and "Have n't I seen *all* the pictures and *all* the statuary?" from a nice American girl of ten, trailing wearily in the wake of a family party. What that crowd did in the Louvre, they would do again in the Luxembourg and the other show-places of Paris, and what they did in Paris, they would repeat in the other cities

of Europe. After weeks of fatigue and discomfort, they will return to their own place, with an exhausted letter of credit and a severe fit of mental indigestion. Their photographs and souvenirs and picture post-cards and well-marked Baedekers will be alive to testify that they have seen certain things. That knowledge must represent the utmost extent of the profit they have derived from their travail.

The motive which impels thousands upon thousands to endure so much labour and sorrow for such paltry returns is precisely the motive which sends thousands to Lourdes and Sainte-Anne de Beaupré. It is the expectation of miracle. An innate, universal, undying instinct of romance sways mankind from the cradle to the grave. The lure of the unknown which fills religious houses, supports the institution of marriage and fits out Arctic expeditions, also draws the tripper to the seaside and the Cook's tourist to Paris. The unknown, the novel, the strange may have magical power. Here, at home, we are poor creatures, but change our environment and we shall be different. The poor save, and the unnecessarily rich squander, for the same end. Both fondly hope that the mere sight of strange coasts, of storied cities in alien lands, of pictures, cathedrals, mountains will effect some agreeable change in their personalities, and continue as a bright influence throughout their lives. Perhaps

they have not clearly considered the nature of that change, but one and all expect it to arise from their contact with the unknown; and one and all are disappointed.

Perhaps those curious German tourists one sees in Switzerland are not disappointed. Those flat-chested, shapeless women, those stocky men with balustrade legs, arrayed in travesties of Norfolk jackets and knickers, all furnished with *Rucksacks* and alpenstocks, are probably to themselves embodiments of romance. They have forsaken their offices and their kitchens for a fortnight's holiday on a circular ticket; but for the time being, they are living in a fairy-tale. The alpenstock is the modern equivalent for the *Pilgerstab*, of which a thousand German ballads sing. As they march from one hotel to another, they feel themselves to be wandering through the wide world like the heroes of a thousand *Maerchen*. They know that there is many a road and many a by-way they have not yet footed, and many a brew of beer they have never tested; and so they carry their atmosphere with them, the atmosphere of romance.

II

If one turns from his own meagre, personal experience to interrogate literature on the subject of travel,

and to gather up the opinions of the wise, he finds that the oracles give various responses.

Shakespeare seems to countenance the theory that travel bestows "breadth," by laying down the proposition that home-keeping youths have ever homely wits. Presumably then, youths sharpen their wits by leaving home. At the same time, by the lips of his most delightful characters, Portia, Rosalind, Faulconbridge, he quizzes merrily the contemporary traveller for his affectation, his conceit, his general absurdity. The Englishman who returned from the continent with elaborate foreign manners, foreign raiment, foreign vices, offered a fair target for the shafts of satire. Shakespeare ranges himself on the side of Ascham and the rest of the Elizabethan moralists in disapproval of his "Italianate" countrymen.

No later essayist has excelled Bacon in stating general truths about travel within the narrowest compass. With the younger sort, he holds, travel is a part of education, and, with the older sort, a part of experience. He sums up exhaustively the things which should engage the traveller's attention; he recommends some reading by way of preparation, some smattering at least of foreign tongues and the use of a Baedeker. Curiously enough, he seems to admit a value in the superficial by advising not too

long a stay in one place. Regarding the benefits to accrue from travel, he is not rapturous.

If Milton nowhere expressly recommends travel, his own practice puts his opinion of its value beyond all doubt. Travel with him formed a part of his elaborate, lifelong scheme of self-education. His preparation for his Italian journey was thorough; and the fifteen months he spent abroad were in all likelihood the happiest portion of his life. At thirty he was still young enough to enjoy, while his years at the university, his quiet reading at Horton, his Italian studies, and his intimacy with the Diodati family must have made his scholarly equipment singularly complete. Doubtless no Englishman ever went to Italy better fitted than Mr. John Milton to understand and profit by all he saw. With a full purse, he was able to travel like a gentleman, attended by a servant, and to collect books and music. He had introductions of the best, and met distinguished people wherever he went. Handsome, learned, accomplished, the young English scholar was fêted and flattered in one city after another by the most courteous race in the world. The results in both experience and culture must have been rich, though they are not perhaps to be traced in his work.

The mellow urbanity which distinguishes the "Spectator" may be justly set down to Addison's long,

leisurely travels abroad. He was three years younger than Milton when he set out on his grand tour, and, like Milton, was fitted by previous studies to appreciate what he was to see. In four years, he gained an unrivalled knowledge of all Europe that was worth knowing. King William provided him with a handsome pension; and he had no anxieties except to improve his mind. Johnson laughs at his "Notes on Italy," and his work on medals, and they cannot be called inspiring. Addison in his later writings never flings his travels in his readers' face. Except for an occasional allusion, one would hardly be aware that he had travelled; but his attitude towards English life, and especially English politics, must be attributed to the fact that he had been able for so long to regard them from a distance which revealed their real proportions. Still, Addison remained unenlightened in regard to art. He could see no beauty in Siena Cathedral. To him it is only another of "these barbarous buildings," in the Gothic manner, which he can still tolerate because he has seen St. Peter's.

Gray's case provides the classical argument for travel. His eyes were opened and he saw what no man before had seen. He saw the Alps. The shy, silent, gifted youth, familiar only with Eton and Cambridge, and the gentle, domesticated, English landscape, was brought face to face with the wonder and

mystery of high hills. Not only were his bodily eyes unsealed, but the inward vision was purged as with euphrasy and rue. The Grande Chartreuse, which was to inspire some of Arnold's noblest, saddest music, performed the miracle. Every one knows the famous sentences, all glowing beneath their eighteenth-century precision: "Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff but is pregnant with religion and poetry. There are certain scenes that would awe an atheist into belief without the help of other argument. One need not have a very fantastic imagination to see spirits there at noonday; you have Death perpetually before your eyes, only so far removed as to compose the mind without frightening it." Since Gray wrote these lines to West, at Turin in 1739, many have rhapsodized on mountains, but no one has packed more meaning into fewer, finer words.

Gray's travelling companion was his ancient friend at school and college, "Horry" Walpole, the great letter-writer, gossip, and dilettante of Strawberry Hill. He saw everything that Gray saw, but whereas Gray looked out upon the world with the fresh eye of childhood and had a vision of God, Walpole stared blankly at Alps and foreign civilizations through a modish quizzing-glass, and saw nothing. He returned from Italy as shallow as when he went. One shall be taken and another left.

Wanderings abroad in the eighteenth century created two little masterpieces, "The Traveller" and "A Sentimental Journey." Without the mental ferment which contact with foreign countries sets up, they could not have been written. The profit Goldsmith drew from his two years of obscure vagabondage was a poem that made him famous, but it does not once hint that he found travel a pleasure. His vagrant days beside the murmuring Loire, his prospect of Lombardy from the Alpine solitude must have left their bright impression upon his sensitive nature; intercourse with the French must have deepened his natural kindliness, but they seem to have brought him little joy. Goldsmith is always the Exile of Erin. The note of melancholy echoes through the poem to the very end. His review of European society in support of his untenable thesis is underlain by the inexpugnable, haunting homesickness of the Irishman. Every stage of his journey away from the dear faces glowing in the fire on the hearth, merely lengthens his chain and makes it heavier to bear.

Trailing about from barracks to barracks with the baggage of his father's regiment, little Laurence Sterne picked up a broad and genial knowledge of mankind, and when, as a middle-aged scampish parson, he crossed the Channel into France, he felt

that he was coming home. The first sentence of "A Sentimental Journey" has become a proverb, and by itself furnishes proof positive of the author's triumph over insular prejudice. Let prudes say what they will, Sterne is the pleasantest of travelling companions. His very sentimentality was an attempt to soften an age as hard as the nether millstone. A little Sterne was surely needed to mollify much Hogarth and Smollett.

Of course Johnson's opinion of travel is recorded. The Great Cham had his views on all the chief concerns of life. "He talked (at Mr. William Scott's dinner-table in the Temple) with an uncommon animation of travelling into distant countries, that the mind was enlarged by it, and that an acquisition of dignity of character was derived from it." But he had a very distant objective in his mind, to wit, the Great Wall of China. Travel, to Johnson and to his friends, meant discovery of the unknown. Boswell "caught" the enthusiasm of curiosity and adventure when he wished to accompany Captain Cook on his voyage to the South Seas. Johnson refused to write an account of his travels in France because the subject was overdone, because he had nothing new to say, because he had not remained long enough, because he was afraid of being laughed at. Boswell urged with justice that even when we

have seen a face often, it gains interest from being painted by Sir Joshua. He knew the value of temperament. Their romantic expedition to the Hebrides was in truth a voyage of discovery. Here Boswell and Johnson come into competition, and the disciple proves himself a better traveller than his master, or at least, a better recorder of travel.

The rise of the Romantic School in literature stimulated enormously the latent appetite for travel; for the Romantic School discovered Gothic architecture and mountains; and these do not grow by every hedge. To see them, one must travel. Wordsworth crossed Europe on foot, and his sojourn in France definitely opened his mind to new ideas, for he became an ardent upholder of the Revolution. Coleridge spent a winter in Germany and brought back a philosophy. Scott's poetry doubled the post-ing-rates into Scotland. But the vogue of Byron, and especially of "Childe Harold," must be held chiefly responsible for what Carlyle calls "the modern disease of view-hunting." On the Continent, Rousseau preached with success "Return to Nature." Then steam made travel by land and sea both cheap and rapid, and everybody travelled. So the assumption took shape that travel should form an essential part of education, or experience or culture. It is a thing of yesterday.

72 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

All that can be safely inferred from the record of literature and the lives of great men is that genius will profit by travel, as it will profit by any experience. The degree of profit will vary greatly. Winckelmann's visit to Rome gave the world a new conception of classic art and founded modern scholarship. Goethe considered that his two Italian journeys exerted a great influence upon him; but the literary outcome was the "Roman Elegies," which the world has very willingly let die. But genius is rare; it is the value of travel for the many which must be determined.

What is vaguely called "breadth" is generally assumed to be a valuable quality and to be the chief reaction of travel. As the work of the world is done by "narrow" people, as all religions, reforms, and revolutions spring from the "narrowness" of men who believe themselves to be right and their opponents wrong, it is possible that the value of "breadth" may be overrated. That travel is a sure cure for national prejudices is scarcely borne out by the facts. Even where national differences are slightest, as, for example, between the English and the Americans, it cannot be maintained that intercourse between the two peoples conquers the insular or the provincial spirit. The long line of British travellers in the United States, from Basil Hall and Mrs. Trollope

to Matthew Arnold, manifest narrowness rather than breadth in their judgment. They return from their travels generally confirmed in their home-bred dislike for the people they have visited. The same is true of American travellers to England, with the notable exception of Emerson. Even Hawthorne dislikes the English people, while admiring the country. English travellers on the continent are not conspicuous for breadth of mind, and their recorded impressions are generally expansions and variations of Meynell's famous dictum, "For all I can see, foreigners are fools." Thackeray travelled much; as a young man he resided in Weimar, and took tea once (at midday) with the godlike Goethe; but in his novels, he supports the popular English notion that Frenchmen and Germans are poor creatures, made to be laughed at.

Foreigners return the compliment with energy. The average French traveller's account of the mad English manners and customs is just as absurd as the average British traveller's view of the frivolous Gauls. Once in a decade or so, a book like Hamerton's "French and English" appears, or Pierre de Coulevain's "L'Isle Inconnue," in which an honest effort is made to do justice to the alien race. But the enlightenment they afford hardly penetrates the night of popular ignorance. All one nation knows

of another is gross caricature, which travellers generally confirm. In his charming "*Sensations d'Italie*," Bourget makes a significant confession. He tells of his prolonged efforts to understand the English, of his residence for weeks and months in various parts of the kingdom, and of his free intercourse with all kinds of men and women, high and low. In spite of his best efforts, he found no answer to the riddle of national character. It is a sort of impenetrable armour-plate. Where Bourget failed, lesser men will hardly succeed.

III

While, then, it must be clear that, for the majority of mankind, travel is a modern superstition, another symptom of the universal unrest, that it is almost barren of real profit and true pleasure, that it does not always benefit even men of genius, or soften national prejudices, there still remains the problem of its fascination. There is a temperament which finds in travel supreme satisfaction and delight. It is a childlike temperament, at once adventurous and dreamy. It preserves to maturity the child's universal curiosity, the child's receptivity, the child's easy capacity for enjoyment. Being vividly alive, "ennui" and "boredom" are for it words without

meaning. The price it has to pay in bodily discomfort, it never stops to reckon. Stevenson had this temperament, and Boswell, and Froissart, the true "enthusiasm of curiosity and adventure." In his fiftieth year the Canon of Chimay set out from Carcassonne for the country of Gaston de Foix. His preface breathes the spirit of the happy traveller: "As yet I thank God I have understanding of all things past, and my wit quick and sharp enough to conceive all things shewed unto me touching my principal matter and my body yet able to endure and suffer pain." That must have been one of the most delightful journeys ever undertaken. Froissart had an excellent travelling companion of his own age, Sir Espang de Lyon, who knew the stories of every strong place and told them to the great historian as they rode ever westward. His mention of Pamiers as "delectable, standing among the fair vines and environed with a fair river, large and clear," his grateful memory of the four flagons of wine Sir Raymond of Lane brought to the "Star" at Tournay, as the best "that I drank in all my journey," his commendation of the hay and oats procurable at Tarbes, show how catholic was his appreciation of the good things along the way. Every morning after the knight had said his prayers, he chatted with the eager Canon on local history, "whereby I thought

my journey much the shorter," and "every night as soon as we were at our lodgings, I wrote ever all that I heard in the day, the better whereby to have them in remembrance." In his ability to enjoy and to learn, Froissart is the model traveller.

The fortunate possessor of the traveller temperament will have his curiosity aroused to the point of enthusiasm regarding foreign lands, long before he has ever set eye upon them. In spirit he has often adventured thither. He will learn consciously or unconsciously much of their history, their literature, their art. He may even acquire something of foreign tongues that he may be able to greet brothers of an alien race. He will pore over maps and plans and sketch itineraries. He will map out a hundred journeys for one that he shall achieve. He will travel in his armchair by his own fireside. He will hang on the lips of travellers who have performed their pilgrimage. All his preparation may go for nought. He may never stir beyond his own parish. He may die, as the song says, without ever seeing Carcassonne; but death itself shall not deprive him of the rich pleasure of anticipation.

Should his stars be propitious, anticipation may become reality. Some day his dream may come true, and he will carry out his long cherished design. He will set out with the hopes of Columbus, and he will

discover new worlds. It will be impossible to disappoint him. Everything small or great, — the coat of arms on an English engine and Giotto's campanile, the lemonade-seller by the Loggia dei Lanzi, and the Perseus of Cellini, the pink hawthorn beside the Cher, and the mountain peak that hangs over Lake Lucerne at Brunnen — each has for him its interest apart. His enthusiasm of curiosity and adventure will grow by what it feeds on. Cities and governments of men, well-tilled fields and hills whose heads touch heaven, steep, lonely paths and thronging boulevards, monuments to the heroic dead, shrines, praying-places, great storehouses of beautiful things, workmen in narrow alleys and dark shops, soldiers and sailors in strange uniforms, mountebanks at street corners, — whatever is strange and stately and human will crowd impressions on his open, eager mind without ever overloading it. He will be all eye and ear; and yet the eye will not be filled with seeing, nor the ear with hearing.

A lengthened stay in each place will not be requisite. Even if he be restricted to mere glimpses of strange lands, even if he may only spend days where he would fain spend months, the true traveller will express the utmost sweet from every moment of his sojourn. The first morsel of a feast is more keenly savoured than the last. One glance at a foreign

sight may answer a long considered question. Suddenly the key may be found to fit the lock. One stroll through the Luxembourg gardens filled with busy French housewives, each with her bit of work in her lap, may contradict a thousand scabrous novels. Even where the voyager fails to grasp the meaning of what he sees, the unsolved mystery becomes part of the romance in which he is living.

For the true traveller is a king in exile, a prince in disguise. In a measure he has shed his personality on his departure from the familiar environment. He has escaped from his shadow. He is no longer plain Mr. Suchanone known to all in the home place, but that exciting thing, a stranger among strangers. He is a mystery to his fellow-passengers in the train or the other diners in the *café*; and they are equally mysteries to him, so many human beings, each with his own life, his undivulged and guarded secret. And yet the true traveller is never alone and never feels far from home. A mouthful or two of foreign speech backed by good will finds him friends in every place. The ability to make a poor joke with his neighbour on a *bateau-mouche*, or to question his gondolier, or even to ask his way about a German city will procure the boon of human intercourse. Bacon was quite right when he wrote, "He that travelleth into a country, before he hath some en-

trance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel."

Mere progression, mere moving from place to place, continually toward the unknown, even what dull people call "a prosaic railway journey" is the traveller's joy. Vistas open out on either hand, alluring towards the sky-line. What he sees is strange and new, but there is beyond that hill something still more wonderful which he will never see. Aimless explorations of foreign thoroughfares, drifting with the tides of life along unfamiliar streets, are long adventures crammed with episodes. The joy of wandering is slow to pall, and it is to be enjoyed at the full when a man shakes himself free of all aids but his native powers and marches forth alone into the wide world. Pleasant enough in cities though wandering be, it is only in the open country that it reaches the full growth of delight. Only when the traveller has turned his back on the city does he hear plainly far within the deepest recesses of his being the welling music of nature's eternal wander-song. Many poets have tried to translate it into mere words; and many versions have rendered thus much, or that part; but beyond question the palm goes to the German people. In their speech is the most glorious song of the open road ever written:—

O Wandern! O Wandern! du freie Burschenlust!
Da wehet Gottes Odem so frisch in der Brust!
Da singet und jauchzet das Herz zum Himmelszelt;
Wie bist du doch so schön, O du weite, weite Welt.

The traveller who knows that song has always May about him. The trees are bursting into leaf, the birds are singing on every bough, and his heart joins in sweet accord.

Beyond all controversy, then, great is the joy of travel, great in anticipation, great in the actual moment, and great also in the golden retrospect. Pleasure is a pure good, say the philosophers, reacting on and heightening the vitality. But, after all, the pleasure of travel is only a pleasure, like any other; and it passes. It perishes in the using. It is gone, like the joy of a tearing gallop, or a full creel, or a Christmas dinner, or a well won victory at golf, or a Marie Hall concert, or a talk about realities with a friend. Even for the exceptional nature, the joy of travel fades to a pleasant memory in a limbo of pleasant memories.

Probably the educative effect of travel is also less than people think. The younger sort may be too young to profit by it, and the older sort too firm in mental set to be in any way remoulded. Of course, seeing is believing. Unimaginative people must have the object before their bodily eyes. Unless they can look on the glass case in Greenwich hospital

which holds Nelson's coat with the tarnished orders on the breast and the jagged hole in the left epaulet, they can never realize the heroism of Trafalgar. But without the sight of that sacred relic, thousands have thrilled to Southey's impassioned prose. It is also true that even those of suppler fancy profit by travelling through their geography and history. Their knowledge gains in definite outline and precision. It may be conceded further that the rare, predestined traveller will by travel deepen and broaden his sympathies. To stand in the very square that saw the agony of Joan the Maid, to read the one word "immerita" in her epitaph can unlock the fountain of tears. To see Tell's mountains is to gain insight into the progress of human freedom. To wander through the Forum explains the grandeur that was Rome, and the frieze at the base of Victor Emmanuel's statue of golden bronze glorifies the Risorgimento. The tow-boats on the Rhine, and the factory chimneys among the ruined castles epitomize the history of Germany. So much may be granted. Still, more than half the value of such impressions depends upon the previous preparation, or, to be exact, upon the traveller's knowledge of books; and if he had to choose between books and travel, he would not hesitate a minute. A man with the temperament I have tried to describe will, be-

yond question, learn many things, enrich his experience and acquire new impressions by a journey to Rome, but he will also enrich his experience and gather fresh impressions by a ramble of a few miles from his own front door. He is independent of mere place. An afternoon's march over an accustomed road up a nameless Pisgah overlooking a valley and a river, or an hour alone on an island of rock in the centre of a silent autumn landscape will disturb him with the joy of elevated thoughts. In Holy Week, he may light upon three crosses on a hillock near the highway and not far from the city.

The truth seems to be that for the many, travel is scant gain, while for the chosen few, most apt to profit thereby, it is a luxury but no necessity.

TENNYSON AS ARTIST.

TENNYSON AS ARTIST

I

TO us who were born and bred on this, the hither side, of the Atlantic, the poetry of Tennyson is, and must needs be, exotic. As time goes on and the two great branches of the English-speaking race, the insular and the continental, grow further and further apart in their separate development of national and social ideals, the more strange and foreign will his work appear to all who are not British born. The conditions of time and place that made, or modified his verse are passing, if they have not actually passed away. It is quite improbable that they will ever be renewed. To his own England, Tennyson is already the voice of a bygone age. To us of Canada, he sings of a world almost as remote and incredible as Fairyland. This region of romance is the England of the early nineteenth century, the first part of the Victorian era. His life, his surroundings, the institutions that went to form the man and his art are so different from our own, that part of his meaning and many of his subtleties escape us. Because he writes our mother

86 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

tongue, we flatter ourselves that we understand him. In a measure, we may catch the air, but we miss the overtones.

For Tennyson is 'an ultra English type. He is an exponent of the national shyness and love of privacy. We live a public or communistic life, herding in flats, in hotels, in boarding-houses, conditions which make home in the old sense an impossibility. Throughout Tennyson's long life, his house was his castle. From birth to death, the poet was a recluse, as a child in a country rectory, as a student in an English college, as a country gentleman in haunts of ancient peace. When Farringford became infested with tourists, he built himself the more inaccessible fastness of Aldworth. He attended an obsolete kind of college, in which the main interests of the students were literature, philosophy, politics and art, and not athletics. He grew up amid the rolling echoes of England's long, fierce, life-and-death struggle with Napoleon. His early manhood was passed in the era of those great political and social changes that made a new England. Throughout those changes, he remained a steadfast though moderate conservative. His religion and philosophy were profoundly affected by the new scientific conceptions associated chiefly with the name of Darwin. He was a lifelong admirer of the great State Church into which he had been

born. With it, he accepted, while he criticized, the social fabric as he found it. He was always a member of a society aristocratic in the literal sense, a society distinguished by true refinement, intellectual culture, lofty ethical standards. The organization of the Church, the system of education which he knew, cannot, without special study, be understood by Canadians. The very landscape he describes, the very fauna and flora of his verse, are strange and foreign to us. Indeed, the literature of the daisy, the primrose, the daffodil, the cowslip, the violet must always remain but half comprehended by all who have not known those flowers from childhood. For us these common English wild flowers, almost weeds, are lovely exotics.

One example will do as well as a hundred. The appeal of such a verse as this falls absolutely dead on Canadian ears: —

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,
Pour'd back into my empty soul and frame
The times when I remember to have been
Joyful and free from blame.

In the first place we do not see the picture, "violets hidden in the green." Our native violets have colour, but no perfume. English violets fill English meadows. Here they are nursed tenderly in hothouses. Few of us have been so fortunate 'as to gather the shy blue blossoms in an English May from the grass they hide

among, while the hot sun fills the whole air with their delicate, intoxicating odour. In the next place, our associations with these flowers, no matter how intimately we know them, must be different from those who have seen them come every spring since childhood. English violets suggest to us damp florists' shops, engagements, and pretty girls on Sunday parade. The very last thing they could suggest to us is the child's Eden, the time of our innocence. For Tennyson, as for many of his English readers, the chain of association between the two is indissoluble.

And the sense of the difference between Tennyson's world and our own grows stronger the more we study his work. We have no eyes for the English posies with which the English poets strew their pages. We cannot perceive the woodland and garden odours those pages exhale. We have no ears for the note of the cuckoo, the carol of the lark, the music of the nightingale that ring and thrill through a thousand English poems. To us the poetry of the village church, of the cathedral close, the hedgerow, the lane, the park, the cottage, the castle, the "great house," has one meaning, while for those whose lives have been spent with these things, it has another and quite different meaning. English readers bring to the interpretation of Tennyson a wealth of experience, association, affection we absolutely lack. We either miss

that meaning altogether, or feel it vaguely, or translate it into terms of our own experience. Apart from their own value and significance, all these things are symbols of a life far separated from our own.

Of this local English life, Tennyson is the chief poet. There is a certain insularity in him. His sympathies are limited. Critics like Taine and Dowden remark the English narrowness of his outlook, and they are right. He cultivated his poetic garden behind stone walls. Perhaps his most characteristic lines are

There is no land like England
Where'er the light of day be.

There his heart speaks. This is the first article of his practical working creed. Though he can find flaws in the social fabric, as in "Aylmer's Field" and "Locksley Hall," he does not want it torn down, or a new-fangled one take its place. He could not live in any other. Browning, his brother Olympian, ranges Europe and European literatures for subjects. Tennyson is generally content to abide within the narrow seas and the marches of Scotland and Wales. He loves freedom, but it must be freedom of the English pattern. He is thoroughly English in his attitude toward foreigners, "the lesser breeds without the law." He is more English than even Wordsworth, who, though he began as a red Republican, ended as a

Tory and a High Churchman. Still in his fervid youth, Wordsworth could dance around the table hand in hand with the Marseillaise delegates to the Convention for pure joy at the Revolution. In the "men of July," in the barricades of '48, Tennyson could see only "the red fool-fury of the Seine." In Scotland, Wordsworth is moved to song by the braes of Yarrow, the grave of Rob Roy, and the very field where Burns ploughed up the daisy. In Edinburgh, it is true, Tennyson writes of the daisy, but it is a withered flower in a book, which recalls not Burns or Scotland, but his own visit to Italy.

The friendliest critic must concede that Tennyson's sympathies are limited, that his outlook is rather narrow, that his thinking is somewhat restricted by English conventions, that his subjects are by preference English subjects and his landscapes are English landscapes. In a word, he is not a universal, but a local, poet, a singer of the land he was born into, of the one time he knew. This may be considered his weakness, but it is also his strength. This is a great excellence, to body forth the thoughts and aspirations, to interpret in song the life of a nation throughout one stage of its progress toward its unknown goal.

The charm of England for the American traveller is special and unique. Irving tried to express it in "The Sketch-Book," Hawthorne tried to express it in

"Our Old Home," Howells tried to express it in "English Films." This charm is made up of many parts, the soft, domestic landscape, the evidence on every hand of a rich, ordered, long-established civilization, the historical and literary associations. What the well-attuned observer feels from without, Tennyson, the son of the soil, feels from within. His poetry is steeped in it, and moves in a pure, fine atmosphere of beauty, of dignity, of elevated thought, of noble emotion. So thorough an Englishwoman as Thackeray's daughter wrote: "One must be English born, I think, to know how English is the spell which this great enchanter casts over us; the very spirit of the land descends upon us, as the visions he evokes come closing round." England cannot possibly be as beautiful as Tennysonland, for over that broods the consecration and the poet's dream. Still it is a fair land, rich in natural beauty, rich in memories of great deeds, rich in great men, a mother of nations. How far soever the various branches of our race may diverge, our common literature must remain a great bond, a force making for unity. So the poetry of Tennyson will long continue to the new nations the symbol of what was noblest in the life of the home island, a rallying-point for those souls that are touched to the finest issues. The wise Goethe declares that whoever wishes to understand a poet must journey to the

poet's land. It is also true that the poetry arouses interest in the poet's land and leads us to think well of the people he represents. So may a study of verse lead to a mutual knowledge in nations, that more and more perfect understanding which makes for the harmony of the world and was Tennyson's own dream.

II

Tennyson has been greatly praised as a moralist, a philosopher and a religious teacher. He is not without significance under every one of these aspects, but under none of them did he first come before the world. He was first, last, and always an artist, an artist born, an artist by training, an artist to the tips of his fingers and to the marrow of his bones. He belongs to that small band of illuminated spirits to whom the universe reveals itself chiefly as wonder and beauty. They live in the *credo* of Fra Lippo Lippi, —

If you get simple beauty and naught else
You get about the best thing God invents.

They can never rest until they have embodied their visions in outward form. Haunted by both the rapture of achievement and the heavy consciousness of failure, they strive to interpret this basal principle of the universe into colour, or bronze, or marble, or

tone, or sweet-flowing words. From youth to age, Tennyson is an artist whose chosen medium is language, a seer who renders into words the visions of beauty vouchsafed to his eyes; he is a singer, a poet.

Like Milton he dedicated his whole long life to his art. He held no office, he adopted no bread-winning profession. He never deviated into prose. His programme of self-culture was never interrupted by any Latin secretaryship, still less by two decades of noisy pamphleteering. Like Milton, he set out with a lofty conception of the poet's vocation. He, too, would first make himself a true poem if he would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things. He was not content to be the idle singer of an empty day, like Morris, though perhaps he did aspire on the other hand to be, like Shelley, one of the unacknowledged legislators of the world. He is himself the best example of his own description: —

The poet in a golden clime was born,
With golden stars above;
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
The love of love.

The poet is a seer; he is an influence; through him truth is multiplied on truth until the world shows like one great garden: freedom which is wisdom arises and shakes the world with the poet's scroll. Few youthful poets have had a more beautiful dream of

the poet's place and power. The golden clime he is born into is lighted by the same golden stars that shone upon Spenser's realm of faerie. To every aura of beauty he is tremblingly alive. The alluring mysteries, the puzzling revelations of the loveliness of women, the form and colour of the visible world, dreams and flowers and the morning of the times — of these he is the youthful interpreter. His earliest poems dwell apart

In regions mild of calm and serene air
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
That men call Earth.

It seems as if nothing ever could perturb that ample, tranced, pellucid ether. He is himself an unwitting prisoner in his own Palace of Art, until the bolt that struck down the friend at his side shattered also the airy dome of that stately fabric and left him desolate to all the bleak winds of the world. But from the very dawn of consciousness till its eclipse in death, he followed hard after the Gleam.

The record shows him to have been an artist in all parts of his life. He thought of his work as a painter thinks of his, considering subjects, studying them, selecting some, rejecting others, making large plans, meditating form, outline, disposition of masses, detail, ornament, finish. He harvested his thoughts, he even garnered in his dreams. He made his *plein*

air sketches which he afterwards worked up carefully in the studio.] He was not perfect at first; he made errors, but he persisted and he attained to mastery. He lived for and in his art and at last his art enabled him to live. He had the artist's patience; he was, in his own phrase, a man of long-enduring hopes. He could be silent for ten years, the ten precious years between twenty and thirty when the work of most poets is done and over. He could build slowly through seventeen years the lofty rhyme of his elegies in memory of his friend enskied and sainted; and he could follow out the plan of his "Idylls" for forty. His poetic career is the career of a star, unhasting but unresting. He offers for our acceptance no fragments, only completed things. At the same time, he had the artist's fury, composing "Enoch Arden" in a fortnight, or "The Revenge" in a few days, after keeping the first line on his desk for years. He had his frequent hours of inspiration when he waited mystically for things to "come" to him. "Crossing the Bar" "came" thus. Another mark of the true artist was his insatiable hunger and thirst after perfection. Deep down in his nature burned an unquenchable contempt for weaklings who set the "how much before the how." In his ears sullen Lethe sounded perpetually, rolling doom on man and on all the work of his hands. His inmost conviction was that nothing could

96 LIFE OF A LITTLE COLLEGE

endure, and yet, in his humility, he held nothing fit for the inevitable sacrifice but his very best.

III

How did Tennyson become an artist? Taught by Taine, we are now no longer content merely to accept the fact of genius, we must account for it; at least we must try to solve the problem. We feel that it is laid upon us to explain this revelation of the spirit that is in man. All methods must be used to discover the x , the unknown quantity. The favourite form of the equation is: —

$$\text{original endowment} + \text{race} + \text{environment} = x.$$

In a Byron, the problem is simplicity itself. His father is a handsome rake, his mother is a fool, a fury, an aristocratic sympathizer with the Revolution; his nurse is a Scottish Presbyterian; he is brought up amid Highland scenery. Hence it follows that George Gordon will be a libertine, a poet of libertinism and liberty, a singer of revolt and protest, a lover of mountains, a timid sceptic. In a Ruskin, the problem presents few difficulties. His father is “an entirely honest merchant” who is able to take his young son to see all the best pictures and all the best scenery in Europe. His mother educates him in the noble English of King James’s Bible. His childish delight is in study-

ing the pattern of the dining-room carpet. Inevitably John Ruskin will grow into a supreme art critic, with a style of unrivalled pliancy and beauty. But with Tennyson the method of Taine breaks down. There seems to be nothing in his early life or training to make him a poet. True, his brothers and sisters were "a little clan of poets," and he himself lisped in numbers. But he lived until manhood nearly in a tiny retired hamlet, a perfect Robinson Crusoe's Island for seclusion, in a flat, uninteresting part of England, without the mental stimulus of travel or contact with the world. Arthur Hallam, the brilliant Etonian, spending his holidays on the Continent, meeting the most distinguished men and women of the time, in his own father's house is plainly in process of becoming a man of letters, while his predestined friend, reading, dreaming, making verses in the quiet of Somersby rectory, enjoys none of these advantages. "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst *not* tell whither it cometh."

Still the boy Tennyson composed unweariedly in verse. At eighteen, he published with his brother a volume of juvenilia, which are plainly imitative and derivative. It fell dead from the press. At twenty-one, he published a volume of poems, which dates the beginning of a new chapter in the long, majestic chronicle of English literature. What made the dif-

ference? What changed the literary mocking-bird into the new poet? My answer is, Cambridge. The most momentous act in Tennyson's whole life was going up to the university in 1828. No later experience, not grief for Hallam's death, not the discipline of his ten silent years, not the reward of wedded life after long waiting, not the laureateship and his many other honours, not the birth and death of his sons could mould his life and genius, as did that scant three years' residence at Cambridge. But for Cambridge and Trinity College, he could never have made his lifelong friends, Hallam, Spedding, Brookfield, the "Apostles"; and Tennyson's friendships had no small or trivial influence on his life. At that time, he was not conscious of his debt, and wrote a sonnet prophesying dire things for his university when the daybeam should sport o'er Albion, because "you" (the authorities)

teach us nothing, feeding not the heart.

This is as it should be. Youthful genius should disparage university systems; they are calculated for the average, not for the exceptional, academic person. But Tennyson could not escape the influence of Cambridge; it was much greater than he knew. Cambridge colours much of his poetry; for example, the architecture in "The Princess" and "The Palace of Art" is the English collegiate order glorified. He has left us

no second "Prelude," or growth of a poet's mind, to guide investigation. "The Memoir" itself does not convey as much information as can be gathered from the poet's own hints and reminiscences in "In Memoriam." The intercourse with equal minds for the first time in his life, during his most plastic years, counted for most; but even the despised university system itself was not without its formative power. The Cambridge undergraduate who had written "Poems chiefly Lyrical" by twenty-one, was very different from the boy of eighteen who collaborated in "Poems by Two Brothers." Cambridge and Cambridge men made the difference, or nothing did. His college days were the budding-time of Tennyson's genius.

As Birrell has pointed out with so much humour, Cambridge and not Oxford is the mother of most English poets, who are also university men. The University of Spenser, Milton, Dryden, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron was also Tennyson's. He is in the direct line of a great tradition. When he came up, he seems to have become at once a member of a brilliant group of young men, by some sort of undisputed right, and the most brilliant member of that group became his most intimate friend. Since the days of David and Jonathan, no friendship has been more deep and tender, or embalmed in nobler poetry. The two were in physique a complete contrast, the contrast of

the oak and the birch tree. Both were six feet in height, but Tennyson was massive in build, broad-shouldered and notably strong-looking, while Hallam was slight and gracefully slim. Tennyson was dark brown in hair, eyes, and complexion, "Indian-looking," "like an Italian," as he has been described. Hallam was the familiar blond Saxon type, with fair hair, blue eyes, and regular features. Both had the distinction of great personal beauty. Lawrence's portrait shows the poet in his youth looking as a young poet should look, "a sort of Hyperion," FitzGerald called him; and Chantrey's bust of Hallam portrays the finest type of English gentleman. Two more noticeable youths never wore cap and gown in Cambridge, or paced together "that long walk of limes." Their unlikeness in manner and mental gifts was equally marked. Tennyson was the country boy, shy, reserved, a trifle awkward, Hallam was already the easy, polished man of the world. Tennyson was silent, a quiet figure in a corner of a noisy room: Hallam was fluent, and shone in conversation and discussion. Tennyson's was the slower, stronger, deeper nature; Hallam's the more brilliant and attractive personality. Tennyson was more of the artist; Hallam was more of the philosopher. Hallam was the acknowledged leader, the young man, who, every one was certain, would go far. Tennyson was

the poet, admired and honoured greatly by those fortunate undergraduates who first listened to the bard chant his own poems "Oriana" or "The Hesperides," mouthing his hollow *os* and *as*. Their friendship was the attraction of opposites, mutual, intimate, untroubled. The seal was set upon the bond by Hallam's betrothal to the sister of his friend.

It seems probable that Hallam did for Tennyson at Cambridge what Coleridge did for Wordsworth at Nether Stowey. The keen intellectual interests stirring in that remarkable little coterie must in themselves have worked powerfully upon his mind and formed a congenial atmosphere in which his genius might blossom. But Hallam's affection, sympathy, admiration seem to have done even more for him; and his acute, alert, philosophic intelligence in free interplay with Tennyson's more vague and dreamy thought seems to have released and stimulated the powers of the poet's mind. No record remains of the discussions of the "youthful band" so lovingly sketched in "In Memoriam." In his friendship with Hallam seems to lie the secret of Tennyson's rapid early development.

Cambridge completed the education which had been carried on at home under his father's direction, a singularly old-fashioned scholarly training, classical in a narrow sense. Tennyson was not, like Shelley, a

rebel against routine; nor, like Byron, a restless seeker of adventures; nor, like Scott, a sportsman, a lover of dogs and horses. He did not, like Browning, educate himself. Books were his world. His love for the classics was deep and real, as his exquisite tribute to Virgil proves, and their influence is unmistakable everywhere throughout his work. From his classical training he gained his unerring sense for the values of words, his love of just proportion, his literary "temperance," his restraint in all effects, emotional and picturesque. "Nothing too much" was a principle he followed throughout his poetic career. From classical example he learned the labour of the file, a labour he never stinted. He practised the Horatian maxim about suppressing until the ninth year. He knew well how to prize the creation that comes swift and perfect in a happy hour; he knew well the danger of changing and altering many times, —

Till all be ripe and rotten,

but he had a great patience in finish, "the damascening on the blade of the scimitar" as one critic calls it. Finish, rightly understood, is but an untiring quest of truth. The pursuit of the *mot juste*, the matching of the colours of words, the exactness in the shading of phrases are no more than stages in a process of setting forth the poet's conception with

simple truth. To rest content with a form of words which merely approximates to the expression of the idea is, to a mind of Tennyson's temper, to be guilty of falsity.

In his choice of themes, as well as in his manner, Tennyson's love of the classics is made manifest. He prefers romantic themes, notably the Arthurian sagas, but his devotion to the myths of Hellas is lifelong. "Ænone" is one of the chief beauties of the volume of 1832. "The Death of Ænone," a continuation of the same tale, gives the title to his very last. It is only necessary to mention "Ulysses," "Tithonus," "Lucretius," "Tiresias." While at Cambridge, he came under the influence of Theocritus, as Stedman has shown; and the Sicilian muse inspired his "English Idylls," the poems of 1842, which established his rank as a poet. Tennyson's classicism is very different from the classicism of Pope on the one hand, and the classicism of Keats, Morris, and Swinburne on the other. Pope and his school had zeal without knowledge; they had the misfortune to live before Winckelmann. Keats by instinct and sympathy, Morris and Swinburne through study and sympathy, attain to an understanding of Hellenic literature and life. Tennyson's sympathy is founded on scholarship, but he is not content merely to reproduce Hellenic forms, as Swinburne does in "Atalanta in Calydon,"

or merely to interpret in re-telling, an old-world wonder-tale, as Keats does in "Hyperion," or as Morris does in "Atalanta's Race." His practice is to take the mould of the old mythus and fill it with new metal of his own fusing. If Keats or Swinburne had written "Ænone," they would have given more "Judgment of Paris" pictures, glowing with splendid colour. Tennyson does not deny us beauty, or harmony, or form, or vivid hue, but his "Ænone" is in its last significance "a criticism of life." It exists, one might almost say, for the sake of the ideal formulated by Pallas —

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.

This modernity is, I believe, the distinctive note of all his classical poetry.

Cambridge and the classics seem to be the chief influences in developing Tennyson's genius, in bringing out the artist that was in him. A third influence was his extraordinary habit of self-criticism, a bent of mind rarely found united with the artistic temperament. The personality of Tennyson is a curious union of diverse qualities. A mystic, a dreamer, who could, by repeating his own name as a sort of incantation, put himself into the ecstatic state, he had a large fund of English common sense, driving shrewd bargains with his booksellers and thriftily gaining

houses and lands. He was both a critic and a creator, and his critical faculty, strong as it was, never overcame or crippled his creative power. In regard to his own work, he was both markedly sensitive and preëminently sane. Black-blooded, as he said himself, like all the Tennysons, he never forgot or forgave an adverse criticism; but he had humour and a power of detachment. He was too wise to think that he could ever have done with learning, and he was willing to learn even from unfriendly critics. When "Scorpion" Lockhart stung him to the quick in the "Quarterly," or "musty Christopher" bludgeoned him in "Blackwood's," he could not help feeling hurt, but neither could he help seeing whatever justice was mingled with the abuse. In subsequent editions, he suppressed poems that they hit hardest, and removed or modified phrases that they ridiculed. Among poets, Tennyson stands alone in this peculiar deference to the opinions of others, and this habit of profiting by criticism, while resenting it. Most poets take Pilate's attitude, "What I have written, I have written."

But Tennyson was his own best critic. He had keener eyes for flaws in his work than the Lockharts and the Wilsons, and a deeper interest in removing them. Unweariedly he labours onwards to the goal he has set before himself, — perfection. He sup-

presses whole poems, parts of poems, or lines, or stanzas. At need he enlarges a poem. Constantly he modifies words and phrases. It would be difficult to point to a single poem that has not undergone correction since its first publication. The "Memoir" showed how much good verse he never published, consistently with his praise of the poet, —

The worst he kept, the best he gave.

And Tennyson's "worst" is enough to make the reputation of a respectable minor poet. One of his firmest poetic principles was a horror of "long-backed" poems, against which he warned his friend Browning in vain. With Poe, he would almost consider "long poem," a contradiction in terms; and with classic Gray, he is capable of sacrificing excellent verses for no other reason than that they would draw out the linked sweetness beyond appointed bounds. He held that a small vessel, built on fine lines, is likely to float farther down the stream of time than a big raft. The student of Tennyson's art will be rewarded by comparing the volumes of 1830 and 1832 with the first volume of 1842. The first two were carefully winnowed for the best; and these were in some cases practically rewritten to form volume one of "English Idylls." The second contained only new poems. These poems established his reputation; and Fitz-

Gerald maintained to the end, that they were never surpassed by any later masterpieces.

From the opposite practice he was not averse, when it was necessary in the interests of truth and of completeness. "Maud," for instance, was increased by the addition of two poems, sections XIX and XXV, or one hundred and twelve lines altogether. The gain in clearness is most marked. Again, the amplification of the "Idylls of the King," notably of "Geraint and Enid" into two parts, and of the original "Morte d'Arthur" into "The Passing of Arthur," to form a pendant for "The Coming of Arthur" rounds out the epic and assists the allegory.

It was in verbal changes, however, that his critical faculty was chiefly exerted. As a boy, Horace was in his own phrase "thoroughly drummed" into him, and, though he did not attain early to a full appreciation of the Augustan's peculiar excellences, such training could hardly fail to react upon his own style, and direct his attention to the importance of nicety of phrase and melody of verse. In "our harsh, grunting, Northern guttural," he had much more stubborn material to work upon than the sonorous Latin; but he triumphed. He revealed latent beauties in our tongue, unknown and unsuspected. One principle was what he called "kicking the geese out of the boat," getting rid of the sibilants. He would ridicule the

first line of "The Rape of the Lock" for its cumulation of hissing sounds. To make his English sweet upon the tongue was one of his first concerns. He succeeded, and he showed our language to be a richer, sweeter instrument of expression, with greater compass than had been thought possible before he revealed his mastery over it. In all his processes of correcting, polishing, emending expression, his one aim is the attainment of greater accuracy, in one word, truth. A characteristic anecdote is recorded in the "Memoir." "My father was vexed that he had written, 'two and thirty years ago,' in his 'All along the Valley,' instead of, 'one and thirty years ago,' and as late as 1892 wished to alter it since he hated inaccuracy. I persuaded him to let his first reading stand, for the public had learnt to love the poem in its present form; and besides 'two and thirty' was more melodious." Polish for the sake of mere smoothness was repellent to his large, sincere nature; and he understood the art of concealing his art. Before him, only Wordsworth had treated his printed works in so rude a fashion; but Wordsworth changes sometimes for the worse. It is hardly too much to say that Tennyson's changes are invariably improvements.

It seems then permissible to refer the peculiar development of Tennyson's genius to three causes; first, his education in the classics at home, at college,

and throughout his after life as a means of self-culture; second, the strong stimulus to mind and spirit afforded by the life and the companionships of the university; and third, the habit of self-criticism, which made the poet the most severe judge of his own work.

IV

The popularity of an author is of course no criterion of merit. Matthew Arnold was unpopular, while forty editions of Martin Farquhar Tupper were eagerly devoured by an admiring public. Popularity may be the stamp of inferiority. Every generation has its widely read, immortal novelist, who is speedily forgotten by the next. Mr. Hall Caine and Miss Marie Corelli command audiences to-day which are denied to Meredith and Hardy. It may be doubted whether the masterpieces of Hawthorne ever were able to compete in point of sales with the novels of "a person named Roe." Popularity may be immediate and well deserved, as in the case of Scott, Byron, and Dickens, because there is in them an appeal to those passions that are universal in all men; or it may be slow and gradual, as in the case of Wordsworth and Tennyson. Few will quarrel with Ruskin's account of how reputation comes to all that is highest in art and literature. "It is an insult to what is

really great in either to suppose that it in any way addresses itself to mean or uncultivated faculties." The question what is really high in art is not decided *by* the multitude, but *for* the multitude, — "decided at first by a few; by fewer as the merits of a work are of a higher order. From these few the decision is communicated to the number next below them in rank of mind, and by these again to a wider and lower circle; each rank being so far cognizant of the superiority of that above it, as to receive its decision with respect; until, in process of time, the right and consistent opinion is communicated to all, and held by all as a matter of faith, the more positively in proportion as the grounds of it are less perceived." This explanation certainly applies to Tennyson. At first he was discouraged by the unsympathetic reception of his works, the ridicule of the "Quarterly" and "Blackwood's" and "half resolved to live abroad in Jersey, in the South of France, or Italy. He was so far persuaded that the English people would never care for his poetry, that, had it not been for the intervention of his friends, he declared it not unlikely that, after the death of Hallam, he would not have continued to write." He was, however, a man "of long enduring hopes;" he was able to wait, and fame came to him at last.

The undoubted fact of Tennyson's long continued

popularity is rather strange. There are reasons why his poetry should *not* be popular. Scott and Byron were popular because they had a story to tell and told it with vigour and spirit: but Tennyson has little or no epic interest, especially in his earliest work: the interest is lyric and therefore less wide in its appeal. Again, he does not relate himself to common life as Wordsworth does; nor does he, like Shelley, espouse the people's cause. His attitude is that of the intellectual aristocrat, aloof, fastidious, dignified. He is essentially a local and an English poet. Some of his most thoroughly characteristic lines are, —

The noblest men methinks are bred
Of ours the Saxo-Norman race.

Germany, Italy, the United States do not exist in his verse. He evinces no sympathy with the great struggles of these nationalities toward the assertion of their natural rights, even for the right to exist. The Great Republic is rent asunder by four years of terrific conflict, and Tennyson has no word of cheer for either side. But democratic America welcomed and read his poems with as much enthusiasm as his own countrymen.

Why, in spite of these apparent drawbacks, Tennyson was and has remained, and, no doubt, will long remain, popular, is now to be considered. A definition of poetry that finds universal acceptance is still

to seek. It may be "a criticism of life," or, "the suggestion by the imagination of noble grounds for the noble emotions," or any other one of the hundred that the wit of man has framed; but, whatever it includes or omits, poetry must possess two things — beauty and harmony. Beauty and harmony, harmony and beauty — these are the two principles without which poetry cannot exist; these are the pillars of the poets' universe. Poetry, to be poetry, must possess harmony and beauty; and harmony and beauty inform the poetry of Tennyson and are the law of its being.

Literature and poetry, especially lyric poetry, have the most ancient associations with music; and the further poetry strays from music, the less poetic it becomes. Many poets have failed or come short because they failed to understand this basal principle, or else deliberately departed from it. Wordsworth was in feeling a rustic, near the ground, in close touch with husbandman and shepherd, but his verse is repressed and austere and his range is limited. He is not read by workmen as Burns is read. Carducci calls himself a plebeian, but he is an aristocrat when he writes "*Odi Barbare*," which only the few can understand and delight in. Whitman, who made democracy a religion, and proved his faith by his works in the Washington hospitals, chanted his swing-

ing pæans of democracy for the benefit of a group of London decadents and scanty coteries of *illuminati* in Boston and New York. They failed, but Tennyson succeeded, because, following the bent of his genius, he set himself humbly to obey eternal and unchanging law, for the principle of beauty inheres as firmly in the universe as the law of gravitation. Nobility of thought, beauty of vision, harmony of word and phrase and stanza, just proportion in the whole, — at these Tennyson aims, and to these he succeeds in attaining. His first appeal is to the ear; his verse wins its way as music does, the most democratic of all the fine arts, and the most masterful in its power to stir the human heart. The poet's limitations, his narrow outlook, his imperfect sympathies matter not. Music speaks a universal language; and the poetry that comes nearest to music is surest to reach the widest audience. Ian Maclaren's story of the Scottish peasant who knew her "In Memoriam" by heart is no mere fancy. No more beautiful illustration of the power of literature to soothe and cheer is to be found anywhere than the anecdote Mrs. Gaskell tells in the first volume of that treasure-house of noble thoughts, the "Memoir." "Samuel Bamford is a great, gaunt, stalwart Lancashire man, formerly hand-loom weaver, author of 'Life of a Radical,' age nearly seventy, and living in that state that is exactly decent poverty with his

neat little apple-faced wife. They have lost their only child. Bamford is the most hearty (and it's saying a good deal) admirer of Tennyson I know. You know I dislike recitations exceedingly, but he repeats some of Tennyson's poems in so rapt and yet so simple a manner, utterly forgetting that anyone is by, in the delight of the music and the exquisite thoughts, that one can't help liking to hear him. He does not care one jot whether people like him or not in his own intense enjoyment. He says when he lies awake at night, as in his old age he often does, and gets sadly thinking of the days that are gone when his child was alive, he soothes himself by repeating Tennyson's poems." It would seem that poetry can be an anodyne for old age, sad thoughts, bereavement. The childless father soothes himself by repeating Tennyson's poems. "He does not care whether people like him or not in his own intense enjoyment." Samuel Bamford, old hand-loom weaver, makes Plato's statement credible, that the rhapsodists reciting Homer fell down fainting in their ecstasies.

Though subject to certain inevitable fluctuations, Tennyson's fame was great and constant. He retained the praise of the judicious, while he won the suffrages of the multitude. The greatest and wisest and best of two generations came under his spell. Few poets have been more heartily acclaimed by

fellow poets. Browning's dedication of his own selected poems is typical of the general esteem —

TO ALFRED TENNYSON,
IN POETRY, ILLUSTRIOUS AND CONSUMMATE,
IN FRIENDSHIP, NOBLE AND SINCERE.

In his majestic old age, he became an object of veneration, Merlin the seer. Tennyson was an imperialist, that is, an Englishman impressed with the value of the new nations, the dominions over seas, and the necessity of keeping the empire one. In the last year of his life, he came into touch with the imperialist poet of the new school. He praised, too, Mr. Rudyard Kipling's "English Flag," and Kipling's answer to his letter of commendation gave him pleasure: "When the private in the ranks is praised by the general, he cannot presume to thank him, but he fights the better the next day." A list of those who have praised his work would include the best minds on both sides of the Atlantic. Longfellow spoke for America in the Christmas sonnet, which he wrote and sent in 1877, —

in sign

Of homage to the mastery which is thine
In English song, —

But Tennyson impressed the English-speaking world of his time not alone directly by the impact of his

poetry on the leaders of thought, he exerted a great secondary influence through his hosts of imitators. The parallel between Tennyson and Pope has been sometimes drawn, and not unwisely. Both set before them very definite ideals of technique. Pope's was "correctness;" Tennyson's was brevity, just proportion and finish. Their aims have very much in common. Each would understand the other when he spoke

Of charm, and lucid order and the labour of the file.

Both became supreme verbal artists, and verbal artistry is no slight thing. To think of either Pope or Tennyson merely as artificers of word mosaics, as cunning jewellers of phrases is to wrong them. Their search for the exact word was really a search for the idea. Both are poets' poets, in the sense that their literary influence is supreme in their centuries. Both set the tune for their age. The manner of Pope prevailed in the eighteenth century and the manner of Tennyson prevailed in the nineteenth. Arnold, William Morris, Rossetti would have written in another way except for Tennyson. Swinburne, the greatest of them all, simply carries Tennyson's mastery of words one stage further, and represents, perhaps, the utmost possibilities in sweetening the English tongue. The recognition of Tennyson's

influence upon the minor verse of the last half century has long been a commonplace of the reviewer.

It was by no condescension to the taste of the groundlings, that Tennyson won his popularity. He takes high ground, and he calls us up to it. Although first and foremost an artist, he did not rest in a worship of beauty. He would not agree with Keats that Beauty is Truth and Truth is Beauty, that this is all we know on earth and all we need to know. He left the maxim, "Art for Art's sake," to be invented by his followers. He knew, even as a youth at college, that the nature of man cannot wholly take refuge in Art. He knew that other things must have their share. His own avowed theory of his art is that

Beauty, Good, and Knowledge are three sisters
That dote upon each other —
And never can be sunder'd without tears.

Tennyson's was essentially a reverent, a religious nature. His tendency to brood on the riddle of the painful earth is seen clearly even in his earliest poems, and is thoroughly in accord with the strong religious fibre of the English people. It was an English naturalist who, in the mid-nineteenth century, turned the current of the world's thought. Darwin and his theory of evolution gave a new impetus and direction to the conceptions of man, life, and the

universe. One immediate result was the shattering of old beliefs. No one felt the conflict between the old faith and the new knowledge more keenly than Tennyson, and no one has represented that conflict more powerfully than he has in "In Memoriam." Though often cast down in the struggle, faith emerges victorious. Along with Carlyle and Ruskin, Tennyson has helped to shape some sort of *via media* between science and religion. Tennyson is akin to the young Milton who sang the praise of purity in "Comus," and the Spenser who intended by "The Fairy Queen" to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline.

"And your experience had made you sad," Rosalind might say to Tennyson as to the melancholy Jaques. He is often hastily described as a pessimist and he certainly chose a mournful muse. His great poem is an elegy, an inscription on a tomb, a resolute facing of the great issues raised by the death of his friend. Without being morbid, he is impressed with the tragedy of life and the fact of death. Even in the "Poems by Two Brothers" he is at times sad as night. "Oriana," "The Lady of Shalott," "Maud," "Aylmer's Field," "Enoch Arden," "The Idylls of the King," are all tragic. Disappointed love is the theme of "Locksley Hall," the two "Marianas," "Dora," "Love and Duty," to men-

tion only a few of his earlier poems. The beauty of the form makes us forget the eternal note of sadness in them all. Tennyson's sadness is the melancholy of the North, which is quite compatible with a gift of humour. His humour is deep and rich, if rather quiet, as in the "Northern Farmers," and is a development of later life. He speaks of his college days as those "dawn golden times," and his first two volumes do reflect the splendour of the sunrise: but though afterwards he can write fanciful medley like "The Princess," or the graceful fairy-tale like "The Day-Dream," the first vision has passed away for ever. To realize the general sadness of tone in Tennyson, a short dip into Browning is necessary, some brief contact with his spirits, his unbounded cheerfulness, his robust assertion that God's in His Heaven.

The nineteenth century is now definitely behind us, a closed chapter in the history of human progress. It is too soon to define it, as we can define the eighteenth century; for we feel ourselves part of it still. It was a practical, commercial, industrial age, and yet it was an age of poets. Never before did poets wield such an influence. Scott, Byron, Wordsworth did in a very real sense sway the hearts and minds of men. Byron's influence in particular extended far beyond his native land; his poetry was a genuine

call to freedom, an inspiration to noble conspirators all over Europe; and its power is by no means exhausted yet. The influence of Tennyson has been more restricted to that great section of the human race whose mother-tongue is English. For two generations he was their favourite poet. He was undoubtedly the poet of his age, and the fact of his popularity is flattering to the age. Appreciation means sympathy. As Tennyson was widely read and enthusiastically admired by all classes of minds in his time, he is in a way the mirror of his century. Hence it is not an unfair inference that very many men and women, his contemporaries, were sensitive to beauty in all its forms, possessed broad culture and thorough refinement, lived on the moral uplands, and envisaged with earnestness the tremendous riddles of human life and destiny. For poetry is not an amusement, a recreation. It is truly a "criticism of life." We turn to our poets instinctively for guidance in matters of faith. Not in vain do we come to Tennyson. He may not offer a very certain hope, but he does

Teach high faith and honourable words
 And courtliness and the desire of fame
 And love of truth —.

BROWNING'S WOMEN — THE
SURFACE

BROWNING'S WOMEN—THE SURFACE

THE other day, some one praised Hogarth as a portrayer of beautiful women, and straightway there arose a protest. To the protestants, Hogarth meant chiefly "The Rake's Progress," "Gin Lane," "The Lessons in Cruelty"; and they forgot the pretty face of the country clergyman's daughter in the other "Progress," the charm of her mischievous smile, and her sister, the actress "Diana," anything but a prudish goddess, in the barn turned greenroom, ringed by the unappreciative onlookers. Browning is not exactly Hogarth in verse, but he is like the artist in one respect, that the popular verdict puts certain qualities of both in the forefront, to the dimming of others, perhaps of equal importance. Browning, when not set down as flatly incomprehensible, is a metaphysician, or a philosopher, or an artist in the grotesque, — damning phrases all. He is known as the author of "Sordello," as the tracker of men's secret souls through the endless mazes of personality, as the interpreter of the ugliness of nature, as in "Childe Roland"; of the

ugliness of the stunted savage mind, as in "Caliban"; of the ugliness of moral deformity, as in "Sludge," "Guido," and "Blougram." But could he image beauty? Could he deal with the poet's chief theme, the crowning splendour of this world of flowers, the loveliness of women? Could he, from the scattered vexing hints the real supplies, create ideal forms that will haunt the imagination of the world with their supernal, maddening, unattainable charm? Let me answer my own questions. I believe that no poet has ever portrayed the eternal woman in the intensity and variety of her great gift, beauty, as well as Robert Browning.

No one doubts that Browning could depict the essential woman, — the soul of her. Sometimes, in this task he seems to despise all external aids. The unnamed Brinvilliers of "The Laboratory" is a little woman, a "minion," in contrast with the great regal creature she hates to the death; that glorious peasant girl who rescued the revolutionist from the dry old aqueduct is barefoot; Count Gismond's wife is "beauteous," as befits the queen of the tourney; but description could not well be vaguer. With hardly a word as to their outward favour, the poet sets these women before us, palpitating with life in every fibre of their being. In six lines of "De Gustibus," he will give you a com-

plete character, the barefoot Neapolitan girl with her armful of fruit, her hatred of the Bourbon despot, and patriotic love for the wouldbe assassin. The fierce young thing is there in those six lines, soul and body. You seem to see her black eyes flash, when "she hopes they have not caught the felons." With more elaborated, full-length portraits of character, Pippa, Balaustion, and that "miracle of women," Pompilia, we are so lost in admiration of their innocent girlishness, or patriotic fervour, or divine purity of soul, that we hardly think of embodying such quintessence of spirit in any human form. But Browning did not despise form, any more than Fra Lippo Lippi, whose sentiment is the poet's own, —

If you get simple beauty and nought else,
You get about the best thing God invents.

Tennyson is famous for his dream of fair women, "the far-renowned brides of ancient song." His case is typical. Every poet, to be a poet, must have the same vision. Browning, too, has his dream, but it is grander, far more comprehensive than that of his brother Olympian. Before his eyes come not only the queens of the race, Helen, Cleopatra, Joan the Maid, but all beautiful women, past, present, and to be. In numbers past all counting, like the doves to their windows, like the multitudes of souls

driven by the fierce wind in the great outer circle of Hell, Browning sees the loveliest of all time circling the mystic rose-tree, the rose that has ever been the symbol of festival, of joy, of love.

I dream of a red-rose tree,

Round and round, like a dance of snow
In a dazzling drift, as its guardians, go
Floating the women faded for ages,
Sculptured in stone, on the poet's pages.
Then follow women fresh and gay,
Living and loving and loved to-day.
Last, in the rear, flee the multitude of maidens
Beauties yet unborn. And all to one cadence
They circle their rose on my rose-tree.

Spenser saw his lady in a mood of spring, crowned
and throned, and all about her, —

An hundred naked maidens lily white,
All raunged in a ring and dauncing with delight.

But the dance Browning saw has not even the airy footing to be found in Fairy Land; it is out of Space and out of Time. Some one gave his wife, when they were first married, a handful of roses, in Florence. The petals are dead and dry long since, but the ordered words they inspired remain, fragrant and full of colour. Nothing could be more fitting than the transmutation of flowers into verse. From the end-

less procession they conjured up, the poet by his art has called out this one and that, and made it possible for us to see her too.

If he was not merely repeating a commonplace, the apostle was, for the moment, a poet and a man of the world, when he wrote that a woman's glory is her hair. It is undoubtedly the frame of all the other glories, their indispensable background; and this crowning mercy to mankind seems to have enchained Browning's gaze most closely. In one case, at least, it is the woman's only beauty; it was all the dower Mother Nature gave the frail, white-faced girl of Pornic, with her strange, sordid, miser passion. In its rich abundance, silky texture, and play of golden light, there was promise of soul and face and body in keeping; but the promise was broken in the tenuous frame and the crippled spirit.

But she had her great gold hair

• • • • •
Hair, such a wonder of flax and floss,

Freshness and fragrance — floods of it too!

Gold, did I say? Nay, gold's mere dross;

Here Life smiled, "Think what I meant to do."
And love sighed, "Fancy my loss!"

In death, her hair is almost sufficient shroud.

For indeed the hair was to wonder at,
As it spread — not flowing free,

But curled around her brow, like a crown,
 And coiled beside her cheeks like a cap,
 And calmed about her neck — ay, down
 To her breast, pressed flat, without a gap
 I' the gold, it reached her gown.

Mildred Tresham is another golden-haired beauty, but as full of warm young life, as the Pornic miser was devoid of it. Of the age of Juliet, and Miranda, and Perdita, she deserves admittance to the fellowship of these three Graces, by virtue of her physical beauty. To her, as to nearly all Browning's women, might be affixed the old ballad tag, "ladye bright." "Oh, she doth teach the torches to burn bright," bursts forth Romeo, at the first glimpse of the peerless Juliet, that "Beauty for earth too rich, for use too dear." With this radiant loveliness, dazzling, eye-striking, Mildred Tresham is endowed; for there is sometimes seen a kind of face that no more permits a steady gaze upon it than does the sun. Hers is a wealth of charms. "How little God forgot in making her!" as the admiring German verse has it. She is a child in years, the budding rose, and not the rose full-blown, and not yet dimmed by the dust of the world. Faithful heart and wonderful blue eyes, which the proverb couples not unwisely, and hair to net the coldest lover's fancy, — these the poet celebrates in the famous serenade.

And her eyes are dark and humid, like the depth on depth of
lustre
Hid i' the harebell, while her tresses, sunnier than the wild-
grape cluster,
Gush in golden-tinted plenty down her neck's rose-misted
marble.

The Lady of the Gondola, another of "Cupid's
saints," has also golden hair. When her lover saw
her first, leaning out over the balcony of her palace,
to catch her truant bird, —

the round smooth cord of gold,
This coiled hair on your head, unrolled.
Fell down you like a gorgeous snake
The Roman girls were wont, of old,
When Rome there was, for coolness' sake
To let lie curling o'er their bosoms.

The "Incident" has meaning that does not lie on
the surface; for the solution of the hair from its de-
corum is always a subtle symbol of self-surrender.
This is the same hair from which the lady flung away
the jewel, and bound it with a water weed, since her
lover praised it; the same "beauteous" hair he
praised again in his death agony and feared his
blood would hurt.

In this lovely company is also Porphyria, the high-
born dame, who was so long doubtful of her own
heart, and at last gave all for love, and put herself
too trustingly within her lover's power. She came

to him through the night and the rain, and her reward was death. The madman strangled her in his ecstasy of possession; but her beauty was not marred; even then the laughing blue eye was free from all blemish, and the long yellow hair made a gorgeous coil three times around the bare little neck.

As intense and clear-shining, in her dark way, as these glowing sun-coloured women in theirs, is the Riccardi's bride, the new-made wife who loved the duke, but wanted will to sin the whole sin out. The contrast between her black hair and pale face etches her upon the memory. Black-haired and pale-faced, — but that is saying nothing. Browning deepens his shadows and heightens his lights, until it would, indeed, be a dull mind that took no impress from the image presented. The black hair has a vitality of its own, rolling heavily in the fulness of its strength, like a charger's mane. The massive waves of it are like carven coal against the spiritual purity of her white brow. But black as her locks are, they cannot vie with the black fire of her unfathomable eyes.

Hair in heaps lay heavily
Over a pale brow spirit — pure —
Carved like the heart of a coal-black tree,

Crisped like a war steed's encloure —
And vainly sought to dissemble her eyes
Of the blackest black our eyes endure.

Browning seems to share the general preference for fair hair. The lover who is travelling to meet his lady and will see her again, "In Three Days" revels in thought with her wonderful curls. He seems to leave the colour undecided, but still the line "As early Art embrowns the gold" could hardly apply to dark hair! Pompilia we remember best by the phrase, "A lady young, tall, beautiful, and sad"; but her champion, who speaks for half Rome, lets us know how Cavalier Carlo Maratta the painter raved about her face, "shaped like a peacock's egg" and

that pair of eyes, that pendent hair
Black this and black the other.

Failing Signor Carlo's sketch, I should like to give Pompilia the lovely features of that other humble Italian girl, saint and martyr, Ida, as immortalized by "Francesca's" pen and pencil. After all, there is not so much to be said about black hair. Black is black, but there are many shades of gold. For instance, that soulless "Pretty Woman," "all the face composed of flowers," has hair unique in its beauty. Here is the inventory of her charms: —

That fawn-skin dappled hair of hers,
And the blue eye,
Dear and dewy,
And that infantine fresh air of hers!

The dangerous, grown-up baby!

It must not be forgotten that Browning was an artist, with the artist's sensitiveness to all manifestations of beauty. He understands the maxim, "*peu de moyens, beaucoup d'effet.*" The girl waiting for her shepherd at twilight in the ruined tower, where once the great mother-city stood, has "eager eyes and yellow hair." Colombe is a princess regnant, less by birth than by her soul; she is, besides, "a young maid with the bluest eyes." Before she enters the audience-chamber on her fateful birthday, she is "wreathing her hair, a song between her lips," in happy innocence of the sorrow and joy awaiting her beyond the portal. The mistress of the Bishop is, to the dying sinner, "your tall pale mother with her talking eyes." Gandolf and he had contended for her, as well as for the choicest tombs in St. Praxed's church. "And still he envied me, so fair was she." The poet seems to convey that she was no wanton like Ottima; she was the mother of sons, and her "talking eyes" told tales of sorrow. In all three cases how few are the words that body forth these fair women!

Besides all these free, dashing sketches, he has his finished portraits at full length.

The Venetian lady of the "Toccata" is one of Titian's own. She and her cavalier have stepped apart from the dancers; they have even left off their lover's talk to listen to Ser Baldassare Galuppi's

music as he plays his "touch-pieces" at the clavi-chord. The gallant is trifling with his sword-hilt; the lady is in a reverie; she has taken off her black-velvet mask and set her teeth lightly in the edge of it. The master's music has, for a wonder, made her think. We see the pair together, the fixed eyes of both are full of new thoughts. Such a lady!

 cheeks so round, and lips so red, —
On her neck the small face buoyant, like the bell-flower on its
 bed,
O'er the breast's superb abundance, where a man might base
 his head.

The young Duchess of Ferrara is also a full-length portrait. The sketch in oils Fra Pandolf painted swiftly in a day is one of the ducal connoisseur's chief rarities. It must have been the painter's masterpiece, for the lady looks as if she were alive, and the well-remembered spot of joy is in the fresh young cheek. The duke with his cold cruelty murdered the living woman, but he treasured the painted image of her. There is the rounded arm the painter complimented, and the faint flush of colour along her throat that was his despair. He triumphed over a greater difficulty, however; he transferred to canvas "the depth and passion of that earnest glance." The question, "Dark or fair?" is not answered, but the details given define an individual not to be confused with any other of

Browning's creations. More distinctly marked still are the features of the one in "Time's Revenges." At least they seem so, until we find only one peculiarity spoken of. Nothing is told of her eyes or her hair, only how the shadows shift and change about her lips. For the poet-lover this is an obsession. Why is this individual trait put in the forefront of the description? For the best of reasons. The sweetest kisses, sings the longing girl to Princess Ida, are feigned by hopeless fancy on lips that are for others. This is the sorrow of our poet in his freezing garret. The Face haunts him, grows out upon him from the bare walls wherever he looks.

So is my spirit, as flesh with sin,
Filled full, eaten out and in
With the face of her, the eyes of her,
The lips, the little chin, the stir
Of shadow round her mouth —

One fancies her a Titania, like the Duchess who fled with the gipsy.

I have seen a white crane bigger.

She cannot choose but be little. The little women are the empresses of the world and trample on the hearts of men. She was no doubt a "minion" like the court lady in "The Laboratory," fond of dancing like her also, and dancing well. No doubt she went to the

famous ball, and danced like a feather in the wind, while her lover ate out his heart in his lonely attic. Lucrezia, the "serpentine beauty, rounds on rounds," the wife of Andrea del Sarto, is fully described, but Browning has many portraits to study. The face of Edith, the lost love in "Too Late," is so unusual that it seems to be drawn direct from the living model: —

I liked the way you had with your curls
Wound to a ball in a net behind:
Your cheek was chaste as a quaker-girl's,
And your mouth — there was never to my mind,
Such a funny mouth, for it would not shut;
And the dented chin, too, — what a chin!
There were certain ways when you spoke, some words
That you know you never could pronounce:
You were thin, however; like a bird's
Your hand seemed — some would say, the pounce
Of a scaly-footed hawk — all but!
The world was right when it called you thin.

This is a characteristic piece of Browningsque audacity. The women of most poets are of a regular beauty hard to define. How shadowy is Maud, for instance, in spite of the "little head running over with curls," the feet "like sunny gems," the "exquisite voice," beside this bundle of unclassical, fascinating irregularities! The formation that keeps the lips apart, showing a white tooth or two, makes a mouth that is very ready to smile and to speak impulsively.

Browning's apprenticeship to painting and sculpture taught what details to seize on and what to reject.

Evelyn Hope is as lovely as her musical name. Although we only see her dead in her maiden chamber, as we watch for an hour with her lover, she seems to be the spirit of youth. Over her loveliness death has no power. She is asleep, but she will awake, and remember and understand. The gods loved her and made her of "spirit, fire and dew"; her "hair was amber"; her mouth was geranium red; the "sweet white brow" remains, and the "sweet cold hand." No aura from the tomb breathes through this darkened room; death is swallowed up, not in victory, for there is no struggle, but in the glorious certainty of reunion and desire fulfilled. The lover is not the typical "man of fifty"; he is the poet, the eternal youth, with the heart to adventure worlds beyond the grave; the beloved is almost a child. How the poet insists upon her youth! The artful threefold repetition of one epithet hammers the idea in: —

There was place and to spare for the frank *young* smile,
And the red *young* mouth, and the hair's *young* gold.

Some one, we feel, must have sat for this portrait.

In one case we are not left to conjecture, for one poem was written simply to record the beauty of a woman's face. Emily Patmore is a name little known,

and yet she was the inspiration of two poets. As was fitting, her husband-lover celebrated her soul, and Browning the friend devoted himself to the portrayal of the outward semblance. "The Angel in the House" should have "A Face" for its frontispiece. Now that we have Patmore's "Memoirs," with a reproduction of Woolner's medallion, we can judge for ourselves how well deserved is the praise bestowed upon her, and how strangely words, mere words, when rightly chosen, can give the effect of picture. The poet's wish was realized: —

If one could have that little head of hers
Painted upon a background of pale gold,
Such as the Tuscan's early art prefers!
No shade encroaching on the matchless mould
Of those two lips, which should be opening soft
In the pure profile; not as when she laughs,
For that spoils all;

Then her lithe neck, three fingers might surround,
How it should waver on the pale gold ground
Up to the fruit-shaped, perfect chin it lifts!

Browning does not confine himself to the face. Like Tennyson, he paints occasionally from the undraped figure, but unlike him, he explains and justifies his course. In his "parleying" with Francis Furini, he sets forward, once and for all, his argument, which is the artist's argument. Tennyson does not argue, he only paints. "Ænone" is, one might

say, misnamed: it is another "Judgment of Paris," the theme of uncounted artists. Tennyson is subtle. He draws attention to the spear of Pallas, "Against her pearly shoulder leaning cold," to the foot of Aphrodite rosy white among the violets, to the supernatural flowers and fruits that over-garlanded and embowered the scene, until the figures themselves seem empty spaces of white canvas waiting to be painted in. The three goddesses, the nymph in "Lucretius," and the witch-woman in "Maeldune," are almost the only exceptions to the Tennysonian rule of drapery. Browning's treatment of the difficult theme is direct, frank, manly, a perfect contrast to the mawkishness of Swinburne and his like. Browning surpasses them all in sheer intensity and power of vision, and in vividness of realization; but it would be a sickly spirit, indeed, that his pictures could offend or injure. His motive, the right motive, is given in "The Lady and the Painter." As might be expected, Browning, the original, the innovator, the rebel against conventions shakes off such trammels as Early Victorian prudishness would impose. In "Fifine," he discusses at length the relation of the sexes, and illustrates his page with the arch enchantresses of all time, Helen and Cleopatra. All down the ages, poets have joined the two. Dante saw them both in "La bufera infernal" of the second circle: —

Poi è Cleopatras lussuriosa.
Elena vedi, per cui tanto reo
Tempo si volse.

Shakespeare couples them in Mercutio's jesting review of the beauties of all time; and in his "Dream," Tennyson again sets these most famous of fair women side by side. So does Browning in his marvellous stanza xx of "Fifine": —

See Helen! pushed in front o' the world's worst night and
storm
By Lady Venus' hand on shoulder; the sweet form
Shrinkingly prominent, though mighty, like a moon
Outbreaking from a cloud.

This idea of beauty shining forth like the moon out of a cloud is elaborated with great charm in "Pan and Luna." The rest of the conception is purely Homeric. Seeing Helen pass through the street, after years of siege, the old men of Troy did not begrudge the blood and strength of their city poured out in her quarrel. In Browning's phrase, they were magically brought to acquiesce in their own ravage. Helen is the great lady, not a great wanton, like Cleopatra, the type courtesan. Helen shrinks; but not so her companion; she knows her power and glories in it. Nude though she be, except for her barbaric jewels, there is intellect in the poise of the head, and infinite allure in the "oblong eye" glancing back to note her conquests.

See, Cleopatra! bared, the entire and sinuous wealth
 O' the shining shape; each orb of indolent ripe health
 Captured, just where it finds a fellow orb as fine
 I' the body; traced about by jewels which outline,
 Fire-frame, and keep distinct, perfections — lest they melt
 To soft smooth unity ere half their hold be felt:
 Yet, o'er that white and wonder, a soul's predominance
 I' the head so high and haught — except one thievish glance
 From back of oblong eye, intent to count the slain.

Sordello's vision of Palma, the nautch in "Natural Magic," the bathing nymph in "Francis Furini," and especially "Pan and Luna" are also triumphant examples of artistry with a right spirit.

Poetry may be defined as *Frauenlob*, the praise of women. We celebrate them in epic, drama, ode, sonnet, lyric, but, with such exceptions as Sappho and Mrs. Browning, they do not make a return in kind. Ruskin is right when he assures us that Shakespeare has no heroes, only heroines, and that Dante builds up his vision of the Three Worlds from the smile of a Florentine maiden. As with the masters of song-craft, so with all the guild-brothers, "Beauty draws us with a single hair." Browning, too, has come under that spell and knows how to lay it on others.

THIS IS OUR MASTER

THIS IS OUR MASTER

UNDERGRADUATES at the University of Toronto have much to be thankful for, now-a-days. They are rich in buildings, equipment, and courses we only dreamed of in the early eighties; and yet we men of an older generation need not greatly envy them. We had what they can never have, — old Convocation Hall and Young.

In my time, Convocation Hall was the heart of the university life. There we gathered in June for matriculation, and saw for the first time those other youths who were to be our comrades, rivals, or mere acquaintances in the new life we were all beginning. Four years later, in another June, a sifted remnant of us knelt upon the dais, one by one, laid our joined hands between the lavender kids of the Chancellor, and swore to be his "men," as Hereward swore allegiance to the Conqueror, as Arthur's knights made oath to Arthur. Between those two Junes, there were many strange chapters written in each life history.

Ruskin tells us that his delight in the famous hall of Christ's Church — "The House," as its alumni

proudly call it — was taken away by the fact that weekly examinations were held in it; but I cannot regret that ours was put to like ignoble use. There is a reason even for examinations, and any one who did not write his papers in Hall¹ in the brave days of old has missed a great deal. The ritual even for “supplemental” was imposing. At the fated hour, we sat about the room, each victim at his own altar, that queer, little, solid, winged, squat, awkward, moveable, desk, that was so hard to get between your legs, when suddenly we heard from the back of the room the loud command, “Stand up, gentlemen!” and we stood to attention, while our stern-faced Bedel, a relic of Balaclava, marched in, with the mace before the gowned examiner (I wonder if there is a mace now-a-days, and a procession). Solemnly McKim laid the bauble on the high table; the papers were dealt out; we stood trembling until they came our way, then seized them and sank down.

Examiners, we thought, always looked as if they regretted, more or less, the performance of their disagreeable duties. As Keats truly says of them, —

Half ignorant, they turned an easy wheel,
That set sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel.

Generally they had books to read and exhibited a supreme indifference to the woes of their unhappy

fellow mortals. We used to think that when our turn came to be examiners, we would show some signs of compassion, or try to make things easier, but the point of view shifts insensibly, with time. Sometimes a sad examinee sought the high seat to ask the throned examiner a futile question; sometimes a friend of the particular Torquemada visited the torture-chamber. Generally he was a recent graduate, spruce and trim enough to madden Hotspur, and he sauntered up the aisle with an air of convinced superiority to us that made us long for his heart's blood. But barring such interruptions, it was scratch, scribble, scrawl, without drawing breath until the mortal two hours and a half were over and all candidates were ready to drop. We wrote on a special, thin, square, unruled paper which was lavishly dispensed. Surplus sheets were annexed by the evil-minded as a lawful perquisite. Our Gold Medallist in Philosophy was understood to hold a record of eighty-seven of these, on one "Honours" examination, fairly covered within the stated period. One examiner — long since gone to his account — was credited with weighing the merits of such papers, quite literally, in a pair of letter-scales; but this tale lacks official confirmation.

Though the hall was associated in our minds chiefly with varieties of refined torture, it has pleas-

anter uses. And even torture may have its compensations. I imagine that when the levers slackened for a prisoner on the rack, the words of some old text engraven on his dungeon walls, the colours of the sunset seen through the barred loopholes would fasten themselves upon his mind for the very reason that every nerve was crying out in pain. Even in the intervals of despair between fits of bad writing known only to the non-mathematical struggling with cosines and tangents, some of us learned more important lessons from the Hall than we got in the classroom or the study.

It taught us, first, the meaning of the builder's art. The great, airy, austere chamber was the most majestic room I have seen in America. The rugged outer wall of grey stone, the smooth and solid inner facings, the tall, clear casements at the sides, whereat green vine-leaves waved in summer, the high-pitched roof with its brown solidity and wealth of grotesque carving, — there was one devil with twisted horns, that used to waggle his tongue at me, all through Second Year Mechanics, — the short pillars with every chapter varied, and, more than all, the great painted window above the dais, with its brave, sad story — to learn the meaning of these things, apart and as a whole, was worth at least one place on the Honour List. After knowing only the lath-and-

plaster makeshifts, the squalor of our pioneer tent-making, which we dare not call architecture, it was something to see, to stand in, to frequent daily a building that was really built, a fabric that could be swept by fire and not a stone fall. Convocation Hall supplied the necessary comment to "The Seven Lamps."

It taught us another lesson even more important, — the meaning of the word "country." Though dumb, it taught us to speak that word plain. There in the great painted window, confronting us every time we entered the Hall, for whatever purpose, were blazoned three names, which no Canadian, and certainly no Toronto man, can afford to forget, —

Mewburn, MacKenzie, Tempest.

One day in June, 1866, the Queen's Own swung through the streets of Toronto, with the traditional swagger of the rifle regiment, and in the ranks of the University company marched three young men, who, a few days later, were brought back in their coffins. It was only a little border skirmish and our tiny force was mishandled by an auctioneer; but Ridgeway means a great deal to us. These Toronto undergraduates had not much to give, only the bare life, but they gave it freely in the holiest of causes, on the frontier of their native land. Let it be re-

membered that students of Toronto were the first to meet the bullets of the invading Fenian ruffians. This lesson of the great window was driven home by McCaul's proud, full-voiced Latin: —

Qui — pro patria pugnantes, — occubuerunt.

That was one bit of a dead language which one mere "Moderns" man brought away with him from the 'Varsity.

There were other reasons for feeling gratitude to the architect of Convocation Hall. In it some of us learned that the music of the acknowledged masters was not a thing to be dreaded, but "a kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the Infinite, and lets us for moments gaze into that." To have heard the "Sonata Appassionata," or the overture to "Tannhäuser" for the first time in the great chamber, is an event to be remembered. Then in the old days there was a girl violinist with dark eyes and hair who used to play the "Carnival of Venice" at *conversazione* concerts. Her music begat verses to her; but Toronto men are not so sentimental now-a-days.

Here, too, through the wisdom of our Fellow of Merton, we learned the meaning of the lines about "gorgeous tragedy with sceptred pall." The "Antigone" cost not a little to produce, in time and

money and mental wear and tear; but it was worth the outlay ten times over. It was something that the Glee Club abandoned "Alouette" and the "Carmen ad Initiandos Tirones" for "Megaloï de logoi, megalas plegas." The lights, the colour, the shifting statuesque groups, the masses of the chorus, "the music of an antique tongue" blended with the music of Mendelssohn, made one Greek play at least for ever comprehensible to us.

Convocation Hall saw, besides, our little triumphs of the hour, heard our spoutings and debating. In what arena since has success brought a finer glow or tasted sweeter?

With much unfeigned reluctance I must confess that the occasion of my first view of Professor Young was a "supplemental" examination, in Convocation Hall, for I was one of those unwise persons who took three years at Toronto, when I might have taken four, and suffered in consequence. With the Freshman's imperfect sense of proportion, I had just taken the seat of a fellow sinner in a higher year, and had my error pointed out to me with dignity but decision, when an old gentleman marched up the aisle, mounted the dais, and faced us to make some unimportant announcement. He was an old gentleman with a bald head, a white beard, and a rasping voice: and I wondered with all the wonder

of a Freshman why the others cheered. My dignified senior told me that it was "Young"; but the name meant nothing to me. Later I was one of those who cheered the casual mention of his name on a programme, much more his bodily presence.

There is no weather now so fine as when the term began in those old days. October mornings were always bright and kindly with a touch of frost in the air to hint of the coming winter. The sunshine was inside the building, as well as out, and gilded all the courses. One of the first make-weights I had to shoulder, in addition to my "Honours" course, was Young's lectures in Metaphysics; and I entered the class unthinkingly. Such was the good pleasure of the authorities, the decree of the curriculum; and it was not mine to reason why, — a remark which needs explanation.

When Toronto men of the early eighties call that time Toronto's Age of Gold, they are thinking chiefly of certain hearts of gold, which every test of time only proves true metal. But it is just possible that the dons of that day did not hold precisely this opinion. We were undoubtedly a licentious crew. The accepted theory of university life was "to enlarge your mind and play football"; and some men did both with marked success. We certainly never wanted energy. The men of the notorious "sore-

head department" found the university instruction deficient and organized the mother of all the clubs to make good that deficiency. We hunted out German families in the city to board with, to improve our German; we spent our vacations in Quebec, to improve our French; we taught peanut vendors in the Italian Sunday School, to improve our Italian. We worried the authorities into bettering the courses. We cultivated literature on a little oatmeal; we published an anthology of our own immortal writings; we astonished the world with a new Protestantism. One oddity diverged from the regular prescriptions into heraldry and Russian. Our Shelley spent a winter in Paris, where he consorted with the people called Anarchists, and returned a missionary of the gospel of Henry George. We went to England as cattle-men, that we might stand in the Abbey in the Poets' Corner and see with our own eyes those sacred places which had belonged to the geography of Fairy-Land. We read "Sartor" for the Blumine episode; we despised "gig-men"; our greatest oath was, By Saint Thomas of Carlyle. Above all, we put in practice a rude elective system of our own, quite distinct from that contemplated by the university regulations. If lectures were, in our mature judgment, not good, we refrained from attending them; or, if the tradition ran that a particular course

was forty years old, or thereabouts, as the frayed and yellowing manuscript attested, we strove to lure the lecturer from the well-beaten highway into delightful by-paths of anecdote and reminiscence. If lectures were good, we attended, even "Pass" lectures; and that was the reason Young's room was always crowded.

His was the first room in the eastern corridor. Twice a week it was filled at ten o'clock with a noisy throng, sitting on the hard benches, chatting or looking out upon the lawn through the narrow, diamond-paned windows. On the stroke of the hour, there enters hastily an old gentleman in black, with his gown slipping off his shoulders, and his mortar-board in his hand, full of manuscript. Without noticing the applause which always greets his entrance, — for in Canada we have this hearty Scottish custom which so shocks the decorous American visitor in Edinburgh classrooms, — he swiftly divests himself of his gown, which he bundles up on the top of the high, spindling reading-desk, scrawled all over with "Hence accordingly." Swiftly he takes the notes from the trencher, which he plumps down on top of the gown, wheels round to the blackboard and dashes off an outline of the coming lecture. Each head of the discourse is marked with the quaint device of a little bob-tailed arrow flying straight at

it. I did not understand the symbolism then; nor, I believe, did Young himself. Those arrows signified that these were winged words, as goads fastened by the masters of assemblies.

In a minute or two, the outline is written, and the professor turns to the class with a smile.

Let us take a good look at him; for we shall never see his like again. He was a survival of an extinct race of giants, the Edinburgh metaphysicians; and he brought into the classroom all the dignity of the old school. He always appeared in his "blacks," flapped trousers of a pattern worn early in the century and an old-fashioned claw-hammer coat, always looking new and carefully brushed. His linen, too, was always immaculate, and, in token of the profession he had abandoned, he sported a clerical tie. In figure he was of middle size, neither short nor tall, markedly sturdy, in spite of a slight stoop. At first sight his face was not inspiring. He had a bald head, a thick nose, a port-wine complexion, and the fine, clear white hair and beard which go with it. The brows formed a heavy ridge, "the bar of Michael Angelo," from which the rest of the skull retreated; the forehead seemed low; but all that was best of him looked out of his bright eyes. He had a trick of shutting them tight, and shading them with his left hand, while he motioned with his right, as he said, —

"When I think of a centaurr, I see a centaurr with the horrsé's body as here [gesture] and the man's body as here [gesture]. And when I think of Sōcrates I see Sōcrates with his bald head, — and his snub nose, — and his luminous eyes."

Then we held our breath, for it was plain to the meanest understanding that Young did behold a veritable "centaurr," trotting along in an ideal world; and as for "Sōcrates," — well, some of us had read "Waring" and puzzled over the meaning of the last word.

Young always stood at lecture. We should have felt it to be a violation of the order of nature, to see him sit down. Indeed, there was hardly room for him to do so, penned in as he was between the black-board and the regiment of long desks, which filled the room. He stood, not on a platform above us, but on a level with us. Perhaps there was a meaning in this, too. The imagination cannot picture him lolling in a comfortable *Katheder* and dictating an interminable "literature" of his subject. As he begins to speak, his voice is harsh, and thin; the Scotch burr grates intolerably. But soon it gathers richness and depth and power; Young is warming to his work, and your only fear is that he will stop. The lecture was not an oration, but a model of clear and rapid exposition, following the outline on the board. It is punctuated

by rounds of hearty Kentish fire, as each point is made. Young understands and waits with a smile for it to cease, before he goes on again. He generally ends in a climax, as on that day, when he read, in illustration of some statement, ten or a dozen lines from "Elaine," closing the book with a sweeping bow and a comprehensive smile, at the words, "And soa she lived in phaantasy."

Young was old-fashioned in his illustrations. Chief of these were the watch and the orange and the round red disk he talked so much about but never produced. They had only an ideal existence. I have, however, a portrait of that red disk, labelled to prevent mistakes, and I believe it to be a good likeness. This simple object "involved

"(a) A sensation of Redness,

"(b) A manifold of Sensations under relations of Extension."

Above all, there was the famous ribbon, "blue at one end and red at the other," of which Irwin made such capital and kindly fun in the "'Varsity Book." We knew them all as old friends and felt the lecture to be rather incomplete at which none of them put in an appearance.

His manner in the classroom was fascinating — no weaker word will do. He had a way of beaming on a roomful of young men, as if each and every one was

his particular friend. His Honour men he cultivated; but undistinguished Pass men like the present writer he did not know from Adam. Toronto traditions do not favour the growth of personal relations between teachers and taught. No member of our class will, I fancy, dispute my claim to being the worst metaphysician in it. I remember writing down one of Young's citations from one of the old Grecians: "Hidden harmony is better than apparent." I, however, wrote it thus, "Hidden harmony is better than a parent," and puzzled over it a long time, as well I might. The saying was no doubt deep and wise, for it was Greek, and Young had quoted it with approval, but I felt that now I was really getting beyond my depth. The only time Young quizzed me in class, I failed, and he snubbed me, contrary to his custom, in a way I did not wholly deserve. It was a rude awakening, for up to that time I had cherished the delusion that I stood specially well with him, and I believe every man in the class had much the same notion in regard to himself. His portrait shows him grave, but as I call up his face, it is always shining with the inward glow of thought and kindliness. Only once was he stern with us, when he thought that, in the excitement of a Literary Society election, we had tried to discredit a Roman Catholic candidate on account of his religion. We had not done so in

fact, but we took the rebuke to heart. We "had such reverence for his blame."

No course in Metaphysics is complete without a consideration of the child's mind. The modern psychologist observes his own infants and makes a book of the results, a course of action barred to Young, for he was an old bachelor. The college legend ran that the lady he was to marry perished in the Desjardins Bridge accident. Still his treatment of this part of his subject could not be considered unsatisfactory. His references to the young things had more than a little of Elia's tenderness and humour, as in "Dream Children," that vision of the circle round the red hearth-fire, that haunts the childless man. Some of us expected to teach, and Young used to counsel us not to be too hard on the bairns, not to trouble if they were restless in school and fidgeted on their benches. "Children wake up in the morning and their nervous centres are *lauded* with energy," he would say; and this piece of advice saved one teacher, at least, from many a mistake. The baby, he pretended, was at first a very unattractive, unmoral little animal.

"Gentlemen," — and there was education in the way Young said "Gentlemen," — "you will sometimes see a crowd of ladies about a little infant, and they are saying, 'Oh, the dearr little thing! Oh, the sweet little thing!' Gentlemen, I tell you," — here

his eyes twinkled and his whole face beamed like a sun, as he added with comic vehemence, — “a baaby is, ‘a wretch concenterred all on self.’”

Young’s lecture was more than a lecture. As a mere expositor, simply as a teacher of his subject, able to arouse interest and hold attention, I never heard his equal. The hour we spent in his classroom never seemed long. If a student was ever bored or tired I cannot tell, for I never saw or heard anything but Young from first to last. To say that he was all alive with interest in his subject and in his students is to understate the fact. At each lecture he seemed to feel that from all eternity he had but this one brief hour to drive home upon the minds of this one set of men, this one set of truths; and he made the most of it. How familiar is the phrase: “And I shall think the hour well spent, gentlemen, if I succeed in making this one point clear to you.” He never condescended to classroom tricks, or the freakishness of a carefully cultivated eccentricity; he never attempted to raise a laugh, but there was a good deal of laughing in his class. Sometimes it was the laugh of intellectual superiority as Mill, Reid, Hamilton, and Company, were battered about, and we learned that it was paying something or other too high a compliment to call it wrong; it was nonsense. And the last word came out like a bullet from a gun. Sometimes the laugh had a

less profound cause, for Young's humour bubbled up irrepressibly from the inner depths of the man and his interest in his subject; and he simply shared it with us, along with all that was best in his nature.

I have never heard his equal. I have sat in the seminar of Johns Hopkins's great Grecian, with men from Maine and California, from Toronto and Baton Rouge, and marvelled at the union of culture and character, the blending of brilliancy and learning, the perfect reconciliation of the exact scholarship we associate with Germany and the grace and wit we associate with Oxford, in the Head of the Department. I know the reverence of Harvard men for their Professor Emeritus of Fine Arts, the friend of Ruskin and Carlyle, of all just men, of all good causes. I have heard him lecture to a class of five hundred in "old Massachusetts," at nine of a rainy morning. Behind every sentence of his mellow English, I saw years of special knowledge, special insight, a lifetime of exquisite culture. Both lecturers opened the doors to new worlds of wonder. But Young's gift was something different and apart. He took hold of us; he woke us to life, the life of the mind. His teaching was, in effect, if not in method, more like what we learn of the teaching of Socrates than anything I can imagine, of a modern Socrates, a lover of wisdom, reënforced by the perfervid energy of the Scot. Those

who knew him and loved him, who recognize how much they owe to his teaching, feel that Young is worthy to take rank in that sacred band, so well praised by another grateful scholar.

For rigorous teachers seized my youth,
And purged its faith and trimm'd its fire,
Showed me the high white star of truth,
There bade me gaze and there aspire.

What did Young teach us? Not trusting to memory alone, I hunted out an old notebook, to find the answer. It is not a very creditable production. There are disordered pencillings of various courses, which should have been neatly copied into another book and were not, bits of English and German biography, drawings of shells, Chapman's scale of hardness, alongside a recognizable portrait of the professor and his skull-cap, quotations and extracts from various sources, which would not be of the slightest use in examinations; but the greatest part is taken up with Young's lectures. The notes are not very good notes. How could any one take notes while Young was lecturing? Mine were seldom more than the outlines from the blackboard, decorated freely with the famous bob-tailed arrows. The course¹ was evidently the traditional Philosophy-Logic course of the old curriculum, for Young knew not the New Psychology with its laboratories and experiments. Though I

must have passed his examinations (for the charity of some examiners is boundless), I am not and never could be a metaphysician. For the life of me, I cannot tell what sentence of the "Kritik" it was, which Young so often assured us "should be written in letters of gold." Even now an article of Caird's on "Reality," or a conversation on philosophy makes my head swim. But I would not exchange Young's course in metaphysics for all the others I took at Toronto. Metaphysics was but a small part of that course. Young was a born teacher. That he taught us philosophical truths of the last importance was still a slighter thing than teaching us to think and teaching us to live.

The problem of the external world! Had any of us the faintest notion that there was such a problem, before our Chrysostom opened his lips of gold? This was a common Canadian sort of universe, which we all understood well enough for all practical purposes. Then came the awakening, the veil was taken from our eyes. This solid-seeming world was but the shadow of our dream, if, indeed, it had being at all, apart from ourselves. Everything we saw and touched, and heard and felt, the most humdrum effect of our activity, the commonest motion of foot or hand, were all parts of one unending miracle.

Turning our eyes inward upon ourselves as Cas-

sus wished that Brutus could, we found there also a new strange world. "The abysmal depths of personality!" There was, then, a world within us, wherein this marvellous outer world to the remotest point of light in the heavens is embraced, comprehended, set in order. The procession of Appearances took on a pleasing strangeness and the horizon of those blue October mornings on the Lawn widened to Immensity. It was the time of fresh enthusiasm, of loyal friendships, of young love, and this new teaching came to give them all a new value, a new meaning, a new force.

Young began as a Scottish minister, but he found his true work as a teacher in the University. Inevitably something of the minister clung to him, a suggestion in the dress, a hint of the pulpit in his perorations, but best of all the true prophet's moral earnestness. He was a preacher of righteousness. His course was not a mere exercise of ingenuity, a necessary part of the curriculum, a prescribed exercise for a degree. As he taught, he saw before him human souls needing light, needing guidance; the fault was his if he showed no light, or light that led astray. He came to his work as the potter to the raw clay, from which he knows may be fashioned vessels to honour and vessels to dishonour. What blame too heavy for the workman if, from slackness on his part, the

work leave the shaping hand, flawed, or weak, or bent awry! Though a preacher, he was no partizan of a narrow, unlovely orthodoxy. To youths of every shade of belief, from all parts of Puritan Canada, to Protestant and Catholic, to those who wished to live so that they could look their mothers in the face, to those who were using their first freedom to take their first lessons in vice, Young preached the great doctrines by which the pillars of the world stand firm. He leant chiefly toward those that insist on the dignity of man and the worth of the human soul: "self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control." We all heard him, for he spoke plain, and if we did not heed, the fault was ours, not his. Life only approves his wisdom. In difficulty after difficulty, in crisis after crisis, how often have his old students found some winged word of Young's rising to comfort or to rebuke!

And now, — he is gone. He wrote nothing; his chief memorial is builded in the hearts of those he taught. Now Toronto men leave the college walls by hundreds, graduates in good standing, to whom his great tradition, his great language, mean nothing. It is a pity. Convocation Hall is gone, too, like the old, wise master, like the snows of last year. The new order is no doubt better, but the old interior, the precious carvings, the broad stair in the library

turret with the latticed window that opened toward the sunrising, have perished irrevocably. No wonder the Great Fire killed our old President!

Young worked until within a few days of his death. He was numbered with the fortunate ones who die in harness. His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. And it was fitting that he should make a final progress from Convocation Hall in all the pomp of the eternal silence. I wish I could have stood on the dais, under the memorial window, beside the coffin on which lay the old college cap, like the soldier's helmet on the soldier's bier. I wish I could have joined in the hymn raised by those who were buckling on the armour of life over all that was mortal of him who had laid it down. I wish I could have heard the prayer of the deep-hearted pastor of St. Andrew's, and the words he spoke of the best and wisest and humblest of his parishioners. I wish I could have looked once more upon that honoured head before the clods covered it; and have followed my old master to his last resting-place. I could not, for I was far away. I can only lay this belated token of my gratitude upon his grave.

.

Forgive the feeble script that does thee wrong!

CHILD OF THE BALLADS

CHILD OF THE BALLADS

WHEN the general public hears of a professor's death, it is moved and interested by the news almost as much as it would be by the announcement that some grammar or dictionary or table of logarithms had been thumbed to pieces and finally laid aside. In many cases the public indifference is justifiable; but in the death of such a man as Professor Child the loss is national; and it would be a thousand pities if the outside world did not recognize its significance. To the world of scholars, however, that inner circle which must always bound the influence of a university teacher, the sense of loss is only too poignant. His death leaves a gap in their ranks which will not soon be filled. The little world of those who really care for the highest things of life is darker now that he has gone. As it can do good and not harm to know what manner of man he was, these brief personal recollections are set down in the hope of bringing an unusual character more perfectly before the public eye, now that such an action cannot possibly offend him.

I had not the honour of being his friend, nor even of receiving his instruction in the university. My acquaintance with him began almost casually, and I could not have seen him or had speech with him more than a score of times altogether. Neither a colleague nor a pupil, I was only one of the many who had no claim upon him, to whom he showed kindness, and whose memory of him and of his kindness is ineffaceable.

On migrating from Johns Hopkins to Harvard in the summer of 1888 to work at a thesis during vacation, I obtained a letter of introduction from the President of Johns Hopkins to Professor Child. It would be an inspiring thought for even the humblest worker in the same department to remember that he had even once seen and spoken with the *doyen* of English scholarship in America. Along with the letter the President gave me a piece of excellent advice; namely, not to present the introduction in the morning, but to wait till some afternoon; then to walk along Kirkland Street until I came to a house with a rose-garden in front; there I should find any day, about five o'clock, an old gentleman tending his flowers, who would be, indeed, the personage I sought. I followed the directions and was rewarded by seeing the great man for the first time among his roses, a most fitting place for him. The first

sight was something of a shock. All preconceived notions of what a Harvard professor would look like vanished at the sight of the man who took my letter as the rightful owner. The famous scholar presented a short, rotund little figure (the student's nickname for him was "Curly" in allusion either to his shape or to his remarkable hair), dressed in well-worn brown clothes and crowned with a shocking bad hat. On second thoughts, his trim had its justification. It would be queer to oversee the mulching of roses in one's best clothes.

From under the rim of the old straw hat peered two as keen eyes as I ever saw in a human face. They were eyes which could not be deceived or turned aside from looking you through and through. They seemed to read you in a moment and put you in your right place. The gold-rimmed glasses seemed to add brightness to the eyes. Some spectacles form a mask behind which the owner retires and remains effectually concealed; but Child's were perfectly clear and seemed to ray out light and intensify his piercing vision. The colour of his eyes was a very bright hazel brown.

A day or two later came a kind informal note asking me to dine. The family was out of town and the Professor did the honours alone. It was a hot, quiet, Cambridge Sunday and his cool, shady rooms

formed a most welcome retreat. The *convives* made up the number of the graces, the lowest limit assigned by Rogers, for the Professor had taken pity on another young scholastic person. The dinner itself formed a grateful oasis to one who had wandered long in the wilderness of boarding-houses. But the talk was the real entertainment and it was a feast of fat things. Never was host freer from any touch of awkwardness or appearance of effort. In a very short time he put us youngsters completely at our ease and talked with a freedom, a boyish zest in things that interested them that was surprising and delightful. At table he was chiefly the genial host, easy but attentive in his hospitality. During the courses the conversation was more or less broken, but afterwards, in his cool study, over the coffee and cigars, the talk ran more in straight lines.

I like to think of Child as I saw him that afternoon, at his ease under his own roof-tree, enjoying his fat, brown, pungent, post-prandial cigar. Here was a man who had earned his hour of repose; and he enjoyed it to the full. In his low, deep, comfortable arm-chair, you did not notice how stout he was or how stooped. Like the master he delighted to honour, he was "no poppet to embrace"; nor was that other illuminating touch of "elvishness" want-

ing. In his chair he looked much younger than when he stood up. Between figure and face there was a strange want of harmony. The figure was the figure of Sancho Panza; but the face was stamped with the asceticism of the scholar. The keen eye went well with a straight, keen nose; and the profile was a singular union of strength and fine line. Without a sign of beard, and yet not looking shaven, his "hue" was a healthy reddish brown, suggestive of the open air. At the same time it was without a single line or wrinkle, and it was neither puffy nor fat, nor fallen in. His head looked small and round, and was covered with thick, dry-looking, chestnut hair, curling closely and not showing a single thread of grey. Altogether it was a face which once seen could not be forgotten. The strangest thing was the absence of any sign of advancing years. One knew that he could not be young; the bent form, the crinkled, gouty boots denoted age; but neither in the face nor in the alert manner, nor in the unforced laugh, nor in the brilliant talk was there the slightest symptom of decaying power. It was the same when I saw him last not very long before his death. *On a l'âge de son cœur*; and, to the end, his was the heart of a boy.

It is impossible for any one but a Boswell to give more than a general idea of the conversation of a

distinguished man. Like all good talk, Child's was that day freely discursive. Praed would have enjoyed him, for, like the famous vicar, —

His conversation was a stream
With rapid turns from rocks to roses.

Only the faithful reporter is bound to add that there were no rocks of offence or stones of stumbling in Child's; it was rather "roses, roses all the way." The other guest had been a trooper in that Michigan cavalry that followed the raider Morgan so long and so hard, and his face bore the marks of the hardships and privations he had undergone during the nation's great struggle for life. Mention of this led Child to speak of war ballads which he had written for the Harvard men who had gone to the front. He did this chiefly, it would seem, to bring in the adverse criticism of a friend who pronounced them "too d—— literary"; and Child repeated the phrase with comic relish in its mild impropriety; and then quoted some lilt of his friend's composition about "pork and beans and hard tack," as rougher and much more to the purpose. This led him naturally to speak of his own monumental edition of the English and Scotch ballads. He said that he had been encouraged to undertake it by "my friend Norton," who had asked him, "Why don't you begin? You may

die before you finish it." This is only one more bit of evidence proving what the world owes to the man whom John Ruskin was also proud to call friend and helper. It is comforting to think that Child did complete his monument before he died.

About this time a well-known American writer had committed himself publicly to the opinion that Scott's novels should not be put into the hands of innocent youth without a warning against their dangerous anti-democratic tendency. And the dictum had occasioned some remark. Child did not hold by it, and said, by way of explanation merely, that this same critic had asked him in astonishment, "Can you read Scott?" "There is na more to seie."

Throughout the conversation there was not a trace of what Newman calls "donnishness," that certain condescension in learned persons which made Thackeray find a place for Crump, the Oxford tutor, in his *snobbium gatherum*, or of those peculiarities which make the tales of Jowett's behaviour at his own table such amusing reading. There was learning, but it came into view only for a minute, and it was worn as lightly as a flower, one of his own roses. On the other hand, there was none of that over-plain effort on the part of a senior to outdo the

vivacity of younger men, nor did he seem more than our own age. As I have said, once or twice already, Child was never old. Hearty as his laugh was and merry as his anecdote, they never suggested the least diminution of his dignity nor invited the least liberty. His fun was shot through with sadness. I remember him saying suddenly, and with feeling, it seemed to me, "What do you suppose an agnostic does instead of teaching his little boy his prayers? I wonder what pleasure he has like hearing his son say his prayers." But the mood soon passed and he talked of other things. It was this same afternoon that he discussed Hood, and dilated on the charm of his lyric snatches, their pure grace, tenderness, and unforced music, as well as on the surprising cleverness of his jolly, verbal acrobatics, his crackling strings of puns, his most ingenious yet convincing rhymes.

I am afraid that we out-stayed the set conventional limit and must have punished our host more or less for his hospitality; but, if it were so, no sign or hint, or word or look betrayed him. From our point of view, we came away too soon; and on stepping out among the lengthening shadows of the great Cambridge elms, we felt somehow that we had left all the brightness behind. That was a day to be marked with a white stone.

After such a meeting several things were easier to understand; for instance, the tone of dedications in not a few works of the best American scholars. Such phrases as, "teacher and friend," "affectionately dedicated," "gratitude and affection," took on a new meaning now that I had seen the man to whom they referred and knew that the phrases came from men who did not wear their heart on their sleeve. I understood how it was accounted a triumph of innocent diplomacy to lure him away from his books and his roses to a little gathering of which he would be the life and honoured centre. I do not think he ever understood in any adequate way the real attitude of the younger generation toward him. Never man deserved less the injunction, not to think too highly of himself.

The last time I saw him was in the September of '93. It was again at a most delightful luncheon at his own house; this time he was not alone. Besides the family a Harvard professor or two had been invited, and during the course of the informal meal room was made for a well-known translator who happened to drop in. There was no constraint and plenty of sparkling talk. The host took part all round, his keen eyes noting any lack in plate or glass. On hearing it gravely contended that monarchical institutions were demonstrably superior to

republican in that the British-American professor has a summer vacation of four clear months, instead of three, he shot the question across the table, "Can you grow roses in Nova Scotia?" "Is the climate suitable?" — and learning that all conditions were favourable, he proclaimed, with comic solemnity, his intention of getting a place in the land of the Blue-noses if — they would have him. It was roses to the last. He was one of those who weave them into the grey homely fabric of our lives.

After luncheon, the party broke up into small groups and wandered about the place. Somehow or other I found myself alone with the man I respected so; and stood by him in an open French window as he luxuriated in one of his Gargantuan cigars, and talked. It was our last talk, neither of us knowing that it was so decreed.

Thinking it over now, I see that nothing could have been fitter for a last meeting than what he said and the way he said it. The scholar of world-wide reputation, the man of years, each one with its full harvest of experience, speaking freely of the deepest things of life, as a father might to a son, — what could be more fitting, or better worth treasuring as an inspiration?

A great poet has suggested how the life of the good man is affected by "that best portion of it, —

His little nameless unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love,—”

The good man himself does not remember, but some of those to whom he showed kindness are not so forgetful; and on their lives, too, such acts exert “no slight or trivial influence.”

THE BEST SEA-STORY EVER
WRITTEN

THE BEST SEA-STORY EVER WRITTEN

ANY one who undertakes to reverse some judgment in history or criticism, or to set the public right regarding some neglected man or work, becomes at once an object of suspicion. Nine times out of ten he is called a literary snob for his pains, or a prig who presumes to teach his betters, or a "phrase-monger," or a "young Osric," or something equally soul-subduing. Besides, the burden of proof lies heavy upon him. He preaches to a sleeping congregation. The good public has returned its verdict upon the case, and is slow to review the evidence in favour of the accused, or, having done so, to confess itself in the wrong. Still, difficult as the work of rehabilitation always is, there are cheering instances of its complete success; notably, the rescue of the Elizabethan dramatists by Lamb and Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt. Nor in such a matter is the will always free. As Heine says, ideas take possession of us and force us into the arena, there to fight for them. There is also the possibility of triumph to steel the raw recruit against all dangers. Though the world at large may not care, the judicious

few may be glad of new light, and may feel satisfaction in seeing even tardy justice meted out to real merit. In my poor opinion much less than justice has been done to an American writer, whose achievement is so considerable that it is hard to account for the neglect into which he has fallen.

This writer is Herman Melville, who died in New York in the autumn of 1891, aged eighty-three. That his death excited little attention is in consonance with the popular apathy toward him and his work. The Civil War marks a dividing-line in his literary production as well as in his life. His best work belongs to the *ante-bellum* days, and is cut off in taste and sympathy from the distinctive literary fashions of the present time. To find how complete neglect is, one has only to put question to the most cultivated and patriotic Americans North or South, East or West, even professed specialists in the nativist literature, and it will be long before the Melville enthusiast meets either sympathy or understanding. The present writer made his first acquaintance with "Moby Dick" in the dim, dusty Mechanics' Institute Library (opened once a week by the old doctor) of an obscure Canadian village, nearly twenty years ago; and since that time he has seen only one copy of the book exposed for sale, and met only one person (and that not an American) who had read it. Though Kingsley

has a good word for Melville, the only place where real appreciation of him is to be found of recent years is in one of Mr. Clark Russell's dedications. There occurs the phrase which gives this paper its title. Whoever takes the trouble to read this unique and original book will concede that Mr. Russell knows whereof he affirms.

Melville is a man of one book, and this fact accounts possibly for much of his unpopularity. The marked inferiority of his work after the war, as well as changes in literary fashion, would drag the rest down with it. Nor are his earliest works, embodying personal experience like "Redburn" and "White Jacket," quite worthy of the pen which wrote "Moby Dick." "Omoo" and "Typee" are little more than sketches, legitimately idealized, of his own adventures in the Marquesas. They are notable works in that they are the first to reveal to civilized people the charm of life in the islands of the Pacific, the charm which is so potent in "Vailima Letters" and "The Beach of Falèsà." Again, the boundless archipelagos of Oceanica furnish the scenes of "Mardi," his curious political satire. This contains a prophecy of the war, and a fine example of obsolete oratory in the speech of the great chief Alanno from Hio-Hio. The prologue in a whale-ship and the voyage in an open boat are, perhaps, the most interesting parts. None

of his books are without distinct and peculiar excellences, but nearly all have some fatal fault. Melville's seems a case of arrested literary development. The power and promise of power in his best work are almost unbounded; but he either did not care to follow them up or he had worked out all his rifts of ore. The last years of his life he spent as a recluse.

His life fitted him to write his one book. The representative of a good old Scottish name, his portrait shows distinctively Scottish traits. The head is the sort that goes naturally with a tall, powerful figure. The forehead is broad and square; the hair is abundant; the full beard masks the mouth and chin; the general aspect is of great but disciplined strength. The eyes are level and determined; they have speculation in them. Nor does his work belie his blood. It shows the natural bent of the Scot toward metaphysics; and this thoughtfulness is one pervading quality of Melville's books. In the second place, his family had been so long established in the country (his grandfather was a member of the "Boston Tea-Party") that he secured the benefits of education and inherited culture: and this enlightenment was indispensable in enabling him to perceive the literary "values" of the strange men, strange scenes, and strange events amongst which he was thrown. And then he had the love of adventure which drove him

forth to gather his material at the ends of the earth. He made two voyages; first as a green hand of eighteen in one of the old clipper packets to Liverpool and back; and next, as a young man of twenty-three, in a whaler. The latter was sufficiently adventurous. Wearying of sea-life, he deserted on one of the Marquesas Islands, and came near being killed and eaten by cannibal natives who kept him prisoner for four months. At last he escaped, and worked his way home on a United States man-o'-war. This adventure lasted four years and he went no more to sea.

After his marriage, he lived at Pittsfield for thirteen years, in close intimacy with Hawthorne, to whom he dedicated his chief work. My copy shows that it was written as early as 1851, but the title-page is dated exactly twenty years later. It shows as its three chief elements this Scottish thoughtfulness, the love of literature, and the love of adventure.

When Mr. Clark Russell singles out "Moby Dick" for such high praise as he bestows upon it, we think at once of other sea-stories, — his own, Marryat's, Smollett's, perhaps, and such books as Dana's "Two Years before the Mast." But the last is a plain record of fact; in Smollett's tales, sea-life is only part of one great round of adventure; in Mr. Russell's mercantile marine, there is generally the romantic interest of the way of a man with a maid; and in

Marryat's the rise of a naval officer through various ranks plus a love-story, or plenty of fun, fighting, and prize-money. From all these advantages Melville not only cuts himself off, but seems to heap all sorts of obstacles in his self-appointed path. Great are the prejudices to be overcome; but he triumphs over all. Whalers are commonly regarded as a sort of sea-scavengers. He convinces you that their business is poetic; and that they are the finest fellows afloat. He dispenses with a love-story altogether; there is hardly a flutter of a petticoat from chapter first to last. The book is not a record of fact; but of fact idealized, which supplies the frame for a terrible duel to the death between a mad whaling-captain and a miraculous white sperm whale. It is not a love-story, but a story of undying hate.

In no other tale is one so completely detached from the land, even from the very suggestion of land. Though Nantucket and New Bedford must be mentioned, only their nautical aspects are touched on; they are but the steps of the saddle-block from which the mariner vaults upon the back of his sea-horse. The stranger ship *Pequod* is the theatre of all the strange adventures. For ever off soundings, she shows but as a central speck in a wide circle of blue or stormy sea; and yet a speck crammed full of human passions, the world itself in little. Comparison brings out only

more strongly the unique character of the book. Whaling is the most peculiar business done by man upon the deep waters. A warship is but a mobile fort or battery; a merchantman is but a floating shop or warehouse; fishing is devoid of any but the ordinary perils of navigation; but sperm-whaling, according to Melville, is the most exciting and dangerous kind of big-game hunting. One part of the author's triumph consists in having made the complicated operations of this strange pursuit perfectly familiar to the reader; and that not in any dull, pedantic fashion, but touched with the imagination, the humour, the fancy, the reflection of a poet. His intimate knowledge of his subject and his intense interest in it make the whaler's life in all its details not only comprehensible but fascinating.

A bare outline of the story, though it cannot suggest its peculiar charm, may arouse a desire to know more about it. The book takes its name from a monstrous, invincible, sperm whale of diabolical strength and malice. In an encounter with this leviathan, Ahab, the captain of a Nantucket whaler, has had his leg torn off. The long illness which ensues drives him mad; and his one thought upon recovery is vengeance upon the creature that has mutilated him. He gets command of the *Pequod*, concealing his purpose with the cunning of insanity until the fitting moment comes:

then he swears the whole crew into his fatal vendetta. From this point on, the mad captain bears down all opposition, imposes his own iron will upon the ship's company, and affects them with like heat, until they are as one keen weapon fitted to his hand and to his purpose. In spite of all difficulties, in spite of all signs and portents and warnings, human and divine, he drives on to certain destruction. Everything conduces to one end, a three days' battle with the monster, which staves in and sinks the ship, like the ill-fated *Essex*.

For a tale of such length, "Moby Dick" is undoubtedly well constructed. Possibly the "Town-Ho's Story," interesting as it is, somewhat checks the progress of the plot; but by the time the reader reaches this point, he is infected with the leisurely, trade-wind, whaling atmosphere, and has no desire to proceed faster than at the *Pequod's* own cruising rate. Possibly the book might be shortened by excision, but when one looks over the chapters it is hard to decide which to sacrifice. The interest begins with the quaint words of the opening sentence, "Call me Ishmael"; and never slackens for at least a hundred pages. Ishmael's reasons for going to sea, his sudden friendship with Queequeg, the Fijian harpooneer, Father Mapple's sermon on Jonah, in the seamen's bethel, Queequeg's rescue of the country bumpkin on the

way to Nantucket, Queequeg's Ramadan, the description of the ship *Pequod* and her two owners, Elijah's warning, getting under way, and dropping the pilot, make up an introduction of great variety and picturesque. The second part deals with all the particulars of the various operations in whaling from manning the mastheads and lowering the boats to trying out the blubber and cleaning up the ship, when all the oil is barrelled. In this part Ahab, who has been invisible in the retirement of his cabin, comes on deck and in various scenes different sides of his vehement, iron-willed, yet pathetic nature, are made intelligible. Here also is much learning to be found, and here, if anywhere, the story dawdles. The last part deals with the fatal three days' chase, the death of Ahab, and the escape of the White Whale.

One striking peculiarity of the book is its Americanism — a word which needs definition. The theme and style are peculiar to this country. Nowhere but in America could such a theme have been treated in such a style. Whaling is peculiarly an American industry; and of all whalemens, the Nantucketers were the keenest, the most daring, and the most successful. Now, though there are still whalers to be found in the New Bedford slips, and interesting as it is to clamber about them and hear the unconscious confirmation of all Melville's details from the lips of some old har-

pooneer or boat-header, the industry is almost extinct. The discovery of petroleum did for it. Perhaps Melville went to sea for no other purpose than to construct the monument of whaling in this unique book. Not in his subject alone but in his style is Melville distinctly American. It is large in idea, expansive; it has an Elizabethan force and freshness and swing, and is, perhaps, more rich in figures than any style but Emerson's. It has the picturesqueness of the New World, and, above all, a free-flowing humour, which is the distinct *cachet* of American literature. No one would contend that it is a perfect style; some mannerisms become tedious, like the constant moral turn, and the curiously coined adverbs placed before the verb. Occasionally there is more than a hint of bombast, as indeed might be expected; but, upon the whole, it is an extraordinary style, rich, clear, vivid, original. It shows reading and is full of thought and allusion; but its chief charm is its freedom from all scholastic rules and conventions. Melville is a Walt Whitman of prose.

Like Browning he has a dialect of his own. The poet of "The Ring and the Book" translates the different emotions and thoughts and possible words of pope, jurist, murderer, victim, into one level uniform Browningsese; reduces them to a common denominator, in a way of speaking, and Melville gives us not

the actual words of American whalemén, but what they would say under the imagined conditions, translated into one consistent, though various Melvillesque manner of speech. The life he deals with belongs already to the legendary past, and he has us completely at his mercy. He is completely successful in creating his "atmosphere." Granted the conditions, the men and their words, emotions, and actions are all consistent. One powerful scene takes place on the quarter-deck of the *Pequod* one evening, when, all hands mustered aft, the Captain Ahab tells of the White Whale, and offers a doubloon to the first man who "raises" him: —

"Captain Ahab," said Tashtego, "that White Whale must be the same that some call Moby Dick."

"Moby Dick?" shouted Ahab. "Do ye know the White Whale then, Tash?"

"Does he fan-tail a little curious, sir, before he goes down?" said the Gay-Header, deliberately.

"And has he a curious spout, too," said Daggoo, "very bushy, even for a parmacetty, and mighty quick, Captain Ahab?"

"And he have one, two, tree — oh, good many iron in him hide, too, Captain," cried Queequeg, disjointedly, "all twisktee be-twisk, like him — him" — faltering hard for a word, and screwing¹ his hand round and round as though uncorking a bottle — "like him — him —"

"Corkscrew!" cried Ahab; "aye, Queequeg, the harpoons lie all twisted and wrenched in him; aye, Daggoo, his spout is a big one, like a whole shock of wheat, and

white as a pile of our Nantucket wool after the great annual sheep-shearing; aye, Tashtego, *and he fan-tails like a split jib in a squall.*"

The first mate, Starbuck, asks him:—

"It was not Moby Dick that took off thy leg?"

"Who told thee that?" cried Ahab; then pausing, "Aye, Starbuck; aye, my hearties all round, it was Moby Dick that dismasted me, Moby Dick that brought me to this dead stump I stand on now. Aye, aye," he shouted with a terrific, loud, animal sob, like that of a heart-stricken moose; "aye, aye! it was that accursed White Whale that razed me; made a poor pegging lubber of me for ever and a day!"

Starbuck alone attempts to withstand him.

"Vengeance on a dumb brute!" cried Starbuck, "that simply smote thee from the blindest instinct! Madness; to be enraged with a dumb thing, Captain Ahab, seems blasphemous."

"Hark ye, yet again,—the little lower layer. All visible objects, man, are but as pasteboard masks. But in each event—in the living act, the undoubted deed—there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the mouldings of its features from behind the unreasoning mask. If man will strike, strike through the mask!"

Then follows the wild ceremony of drinking round the capstan-head from the harpoon-sockets to confirm Ahab's curse: "Death to Moby Dick. God hunt us all, if we do not hunt Moby Dick to the death!" The intermezzo of the various sailors on the fore-

castle which follows until the squall strikes the ship is one of the most suggestive passages in all the literature of the sea. Under the influence of Ahab's can, the men are dancing on the forecastle. The old Manx sailor says: —

“I wonder whether those jolly lads bethink them of what they are dancing over. I'll dance over your grave, I will,—that 's the bitterest threat of your night-women, that beat head-winds round corners. O, Christ! to think of the green navies and the green-skulled crews.”

Where every page, almost every paragraph, has its quaint or telling phrase, or thought, or suggested picture, it is hard to make a selection; and even the choicest morsels give you no idea of the richness of the feast. Melville's humour has been mentioned; it is a constant quantity. Perhaps the statement of his determination after the adventure of the first lowering is as good an example as any: —

Here, then, from three impartial witnesses, I had a deliberate statement of the case. Considering, therefore, that squalls and capsizings in the water, and consequent bivouacks in the deep, were matters of common occurrence in this kind of life; considering that at the superlatively critical moment of going on to the whale I must resign my life into the hands of him who steered the boat — oftentimes a fellow who at that very moment is in his impetuosity upon the point of scuttling the craft with his own frantic stampings; considering that the particular disaster to our own particular boat was

chiefly to be imputed to Starbuck's driving on to his whale, almost in the teeth of a squall, and considering that Starbuck, notwithstanding, was famous for his great heedfulness in the fishery; considering that I belonged to this uncommonly prudent Starbuck's boat; and finally considering in what a devil's chase I was implicated, touching the White Whale: taking all things together, I say, I thought I might as well go below and make a rough draft of my will.

"Queequeg," said I, "come along and you shall be my lawyer, executor, and legatee."

The humour has the usual tinge of Northern melancholy, and sometimes a touch of Rabelais. The exhortations of Stubb to his boat's crew, on different occasions, or such chapters as "Queen Mab," "The Cassock," "Leg and Arm," "Stubb's Supper," are good examples of his peculiar style.

But, after all, his chief excellence is bringing to the landsman the very salt of the sea-breeze, while to one who has long known the ocean, he is as one praising to the lover the chiefest beauties of the Beloved. The magic of the ship and the mystery of the sea are put into words that form pictures for the dullest eyes. The chapter, "The Spirit Spout," contains these two aquarelles of the moonlit sea and the speeding ship side by side: —

It was while gliding through these latter waters that one serene and moonlight night, when all the waves rolled by like scrolls of silver; and by their soft, suffusing

seethings all things made what seemed a silvery silence, not a solitude; on such a silent night a silvery jet was seen far in advance of the white bubbles at the bow. Lit up by the moon it looked celestial; seemed some plumed and glittering god uprising from the sea. . . .

Walking the deck, with quick, side-lunging strides, Ahab commanded the t'gallant sails and royals to be set, and every stunsail spread. The best man in the ship must take the helm. Then, with every masthead manned, the piled-up craft rolled down before the wind. The strange, upheaving, lifting tendency of the taffrail breeze filling the hollows of so many sails made the buoyant, hovering deck to feel like air beneath the feet.

In the chapter called "The Needle," ship and sea and sky are blended in one unforgettable whole: —

Next morning the not-yet-subsided sea rolled in long slow billows of mighty bulk, and striving in the Pequod's gurgling track, pushed her on like giants' palms outspread. The strong, unstaggering breeze abounded so, that sky and air seemed vast outbellying sails; the whole world boomed before the wind. Muffled in the full morning light, the invisible sun was only known by the spread intensity of his place; where his bayonet rays moved on in stacks. Emblazonings, as of crowned Babylonian kings and queens, reigned over everything. The sea was a crucible of molten gold, that bubblingly leaps with light and heat.

It would be hard to find five consecutive sentences anywhere containing such pictures and such vivid, pregnant, bold imagery: but this book is made up of such things.

The hero of the book is, after all, not Captain Ahab, but his triumphant antagonist, the mystic white monster of the sea, and it is only fitting that he should come for a moment, at least, into the saga. A complete scientific memoir of the sperm whale as known to man might be quarried from this book, for Melville has described the creature from his birth to his death, and even burial in the oil casks and the ocean. He has described him living, dead, and anatomized. At least one such description is in place here. The appearance of the whale on the second day of the fatal chase is by "breaching," and nothing can be clearer than Melville's account of it: —

The triumphant halloo of thirty buckskin lungs was heard, as — much nearer to the ship than the place of the imaginary jet, less than a mile ahead — Moby Dick bodily burst into view! For not by any calm and indolent spoutings, not by the peaceable gush of that mystic fountain in his head, did the White Whale now reveal his vicinity; but by the far more wondrous phenomenon of breaching. Rising with his utmost velocity from the farthest depths, the Sperm Whale thus booms his entire bulk into the pure element of air, and piling up a mountain of dazzling foam, shows his place to the distance of seven miles and more. In those moments the torn, enraged waves he shakes off seem his mane; in some cases this breaching is his act of defiance.

"There she breaches! there she breaches!" was the cry, as in his immeasurable bravadoes the White Whale tossed himself salmon-like to heaven. So suddenly seen

in the blue plain of the sea, and relieved against the still bluer margin of the sky, the spray that he raised for the moment intolerably glittered and glared like a glacier; and stood there gradually fading and fading away from its first sparkling intensity to the dim mistiness of an advancing shower in a vale.

This book is at once the epic and the encyclopædia of whaling. It is a monument to the honour of an extinct race of daring seamen; but it is a monument overgrown with the lichen of neglect. Those who will care to scrape away the moss may be few, but they will have their reward. To the class of gentleman-adventurer, to those who love both books and free life under the wide and open sky, it must always appeal. Melville takes rank with Borrow, and Jefferies, and Thoreau, and Sir Richard Burton; and his place in this brotherhood of notables is not the lowest. Those who feel the salt in their blood that draws them time and again out of the city to the wharves and the ships, almost without their knowledge or their will; those who feel the irresistible lure of the spring, away from the cramped and noisy town, up the long road to the peaceful companionship of the awaking earth and the untainted sky; all those — and they are many — will find in Melville's great book an ever fresh and constant charm.

EVANGELINE AND THE REAL
ACADIANS

EVANGELINE AND THE REAL ACADIANS

I

MAN is a lover and maker of myths. From prejudice, from chivalry, from patriotism, from mental sloth, from sheer inability to know the thing which is, and tell a plain tale, neither adding nor abating aught, — from what is best and from what is worst in his nature, — he cherishes legend, fable, romance, anything but the simple fact. There is one hard way of hitting the white, and there are ten thousand easy ways of roving from it. The clearest demonstration of sober, lazy-pacing history can never oust a pleasing fiction from the popular belief. Perhaps this is a necessary part of the sorry scheme of things. Perhaps the very reason for the existence of the actual is to furnish a foundation for our gorgeous dream palaces, wherein we spend our lives charmed by a splendour which is only painted air.

Fact and fiction are almost impossible to disentangle in the popular conception of that most pathetic incident, the forcible deportation of the French set-

tlers from Nova Scotia by the English Government in 1755. They were removed, not exterminated, — as was the Huguenot colony in Florida by the Spaniards. They were a mere handful compared with the three hundred thousand French citizens dragooned out of France upon the revocation of the great Henry's edict. Theirs was not so hard a fate as that of the thirty thousand Tories driven into vagabond exile at the close of the Revolutionary War. Nobody pities the Huguenots or the Loyalists; but the sufferings of the Acadians are blown in every ear. All the world knows their sad story; for they have not lacked their sacred poet. When the Reverend Mr. Conolly told the story of the two parted Acadian lovers, and Hawthorne turned the material over to Longfellow, none of them could foresee the consequences of their action.

The immediate outcome was "Evangeline," published in 1847. It became at once popular; now, after more than sixty years, its popularity is greater than ever. Within twelve years, the American tourist noted engravings of Faed's Evangeline in the print-shops of Halifax. The poem had crossed the ocean, furnished inspiration to the artist, the picture of the heroine — a thoroughly English type — was engraved, and the prints were familiar on this side of the Atlantic within a very short time. "Evangeline" is the best-

known poem *de longue haleine* ever written in America. Year after year thousands of Canadian and American school-children con the tale of the desolation of Grand Pré. The annotated editions for their use promise to extend into an infinite series. In the Canadian province farthest from the scene of the Expulsion, "Evangeline" has been removed from the school curriculum, lest it should mislead the youthful subjects of the British Crown. "Evangeline" has had the rare honour of being translated into French by a French Canadian: in 1865, Pamphile Le May published his version of it among his "Essais Poétiques." It has inspired historical studies like Casgrain's "Pèlerinage au Pays d'Evangeline," wherein Longfellow's fanciful descriptions of Grand Pré are solemnly taken for matter of fact. The Expulsion is the life of the provincial historical society, and has been the theme of fierce polemic for many years. French and Catholics take one side, English and Protestants the other. "Evangeline" feeds the flame of controversy. "Evangeline" has even become a factor in business; it figures in countless advertisements. Astute managers of steamer and railway lines find their account in a poem that draws the tourist traffic. Every summer thousands of pilgrims from the United States crowd to Nova Scotia, and visit Grand Pré because it is the scene of Longfellow's touching idyll.

Truly these are not slight results from telling a story to a literary man, more than half a century ago.

The love of one's own country is a strange and beautiful thing. It cannot really concern us what was done or suffered by our fellow countrymen a century and a half ago; but French and English still take sides and wage paper wars over this question of the Acadians, their character, their relations with the British Government, and the justice or injustice of their banishment. The expelled Acadians, the men who planned the Expulsion, the men who carried it out, the men who profited by their removal, are all in their graves.

There let their discord with them die.

Let us proclaim the truce of God to the combatants in this wordy warfare, and try to look at the whole matter with clear eyes, unblinded by the mists of prejudice and passion.

II

Acadia is the name of the old French province, with ill-defined boundaries, corresponding roughly to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick at the present day. The settlers were Acadians, and a hundred

thousand of their descendants are proud to bear that distinctive name. They are a people apart, and differ widely in character from the French of Quebec. The serious "plantation" of the country began in 1670, after the Treaty of Breda; and the period of French ownership and colonization lasted exactly forty years, until the capture of Port Royal by Colonel Francis Nicholson and a force of New Englanders in 1710. The Acadians held their lands from seigneurs to whom they paid "rents" in kind, and other feudal dues like *lods et ventes*, and fines of alienation, as in old France.

The story of French rule in Acadie is not a pleasant one, as told with masterly clearness in the pages of Parkman. It is a tale of incompetence, corruption, and pettiness. The officials were at odds with the priests over the liquor traffic with the Indians. As the most exposed and vulnerable portion of the French possessions, it was raided time and again by expeditions from New England to avenge the *petite guerre* of privateers and Indian forays from Canada. It was only under English rule, in the long peace that followed the Treaty of Utrecht, that the Acadians increased and multiplied, pressed upon the means of subsistence, and swarmed out into new settlements. The small English garrison at Annapolis Royal was powerless to affect their development, for good or

evil; and this alien people in a corner of the American wilderness owed their happiness to the policy of Walpole.

The Acadians enter the world of letters first in the pages of Raynal. That unfrocked Jesuit had never been in America. His "History of Settlements and Trade in the East and West Indies" is largely the work of other hands. Diderot is said to have written as much as one third of it; and Diderot had a definite aim and intention in writing. He wished to criticize the existing state of things in France by the implicit contrast of a more ideal state of things elsewhere. The same motive has been attributed to Tacitus in writing his "Germania." As a rebuke to a corrupt civilization, both historians paint the picture of a primitive society, unspoiled by conventions and endowed with the rough and simple virtues. Man in a state of nature was a favourite subject of the *philosophes*. Distance lent enchantment. The virile Germans dwelt far from Rome, in the forests of northern Europe, and the simple Acadians (read Arcadians), children of nature, beyond the Atlantic, among the few arpents of snow. Raynal was not actually the first begetter of this legend of a "lambish peple, voyded of alle vyce"; he had something to go on, the account of a visiting priest, which he improved and embroidered. His version is so important,

and so seldom seen that it may be worth while to reproduce a few significant parts of it: —

Not more than five or six English families went over to Acadia, which still remained inhabited by the first colonists, who were only persuaded to stay upon a promise made them of never being compelled to bear arms against their ancient country. Such was the attachment which the French then had for the honour of their country. Cherished by the Government, respected by foreign nations, and attached to their king by a series of prosperities, which rendered their name illustrious and aggrandized their power, they possessed that patriotic spirit which is the effect of success. They esteemed it an honour to bear the name of Frenchmen, and could not think of foregoing the title. The Acadians therefore, in submitting to a new yoke, had sworn never to bear arms against their former standards.

The neutral French had no other articles to dispose of among their neighbours, and made still fewer exchanges among themselves, because each separate family was able and had been used to provide for its wants. They therefore knew nothing of paper currency, which was so common throughout the rest of North America. Even the small quantity of specie which had stolen into the colony did not promote circulation, which is the greatest advantage that can be derived from it.

Their manners were of course extremely simple. There was never a cause, either civil or criminal, of importance enough to be carried before the court of judicature at Annapolis. Whatever little differences arose from time to time among them were amicably adjusted by their elders. All their public acts were drawn by their pastors, who had likewise the keeping of their wills, for which,

and for their religious services, the inhabitants gave them a twenty-seventh of their harvests.

These were sufficient to supply more than a sufficiency to fulfil every act of liberality. Real misery was entirely unknown, and benevolence prevented the demands of poverty. Every misfortune was relieved, as it were, before it could be felt; and good was universally dispensed, without ostentation on the part of the giver, and without humiliating the person who received. The people were, in a word, a society of brethren, every individual of which was equally ready to give and receive what he thought the common right of mankind.

So perfect a harmony naturally prevented all those connections of gallantry which are so often fatal to the peace of families. There never was an instance in this society of an unlawful commerce between the two sexes. This evil was prevented by early marriages; for no one passed his youth in a state of celibacy. As soon as a young man came to the proper age, the community built him a house, broke up the lands about it, and supplied him with the necessaries of life for a twelvemonth. Here he received the partner he had chosen, and who brought him her portion in flocks. This new family grew and prospered like the others. They altogether amounted to eighteen thousand souls.

There were twelve or thirteen hundred Acadians settled in the capital; the rest were dispersed in the neighbouring country. No magistrate was ever appointed to rule over them; and they were never made acquainted with the laws of England. No rents or taxes of any kind were ever exacted from them. Their new sovereign seemed to have forgotten them; and they were equally strangers to him.

This is about as veracious as Barrère's account of the sinking of the *Vengeur*; but it serves its end; the state of the Acadian *habitants* was almost the exact opposite of the state of the French peasants. Raynal's literary influence works in a straight line, easily traced from end to end. In 1829, Judge Haliburton published in two volumes his history of Nova Scotia. The author was destined to become famous as the creator of "Sam Slick." That a history of this size and plan should have been written and published so early in the development of so small a community as Nova Scotia is a token of the strong local patriotism which has long characterized that seaboard province. When Haliburton wrote, the modern school of history was unborn. Macaulay had not written a line of the work that was to displace the novels on all the ladies' dressing-tables in England. Freeman, Stubbs, and Gardiner were yet to unfold the true doctrine of historical accuracy, research, and criticism of sources. In Haliburton's time, Hume was still the model historian, and Hume wrote history lying on a sofa. The "History of Nova Scotia" is largely a compilation; the second volume is taken over bodily from Bromley; and Akins helped to put it together. The continuous narrative ceases with 1763; what follows are mere notes, as dry as the entries of a mediæval annalist in his chronicle.

At the time of writing the author represented a constituency largely Acadian, and was their champion in the local legislature. He therefore can hardly be blamed for copying freely from this passage of Raynal's already quoted: —

Out of olde bookes, in good feith,
Cometh al this newe science that men lere.

Now Longfellow used Haliburton in his studies for "Evangeline"; but he was not the first American to avail himself of this material for the purposes of fiction. In 1841, Mrs. Catherine Williams published at Providence a novel called "The Neutral French, or the Exiles of Nova Scotia." This tale is an interesting illustration of the old robust detestation of everything British that flourished in the United States well on to the end of the century. The preface states expressly that the book is based on Haliburton, and further assures the reader that "the manner in which he became possessed of most of the facts proves most incontestably that it was the design of the British Colonial Government at least that all memory of this nefarious and dark transaction should be forgotten."

The first part of "The Neutral French" deals with the Expulsion, which is avenged in the second part by the overthrow of British power at the Revolution.

Chapters have mottoes from "The Deserted Village"; and the few rough wood-cut illustrations have been taken from some early edition of that famous poem. The life of the simple peasants is given an Arcadian colouring, anticipating Longfellow's idyll. The connection is hardly accidental. It has been confidently stated that Longfellow used this novel in the composition of "Evangeline."¹ If so, "sweet Auburn" must be regarded as the prototype of Grand Pré, also the "loveliest village of the plain." Thus "Evangeline" reaches out one hand to "The Deserted Village" and the other to "Hermann und Dorothea." The chain of literary causation from Raynal to Longfellow is complete. It would even seem that Haliburton influenced Longfellow, not only directly, but also indirectly through the forgotten tale of Mrs. Williams.

III

The great difficulty under which all writers on the Acadian question have hitherto laboured is imperfect acquaintance with the original sources of information. Though Nova Scotia has a good collection of materials for a provincial history, comprising nearly six hundred volumes of manuscript, carefully arranged, catalogued, and indexed, it has

¹ Cozzens' *Acadia, or a Month with the Bluenoses*.

not been easy of access. An excellent selection from these was edited by Akins in 1869, and extensively used by Parkman in his "Montcalm and Wolfe," The French controversialists accuse Akins of partiality, and write still under the influence of Raynal, Haliburton, and Longfellow. This is not the way to arrive at the truth.

It has been my good fortune during a long residence in Nova Scotia to have special opportunities for studying the primary authorities; and I have edited two volumes of provincial archives. Both throw light on the Acadian question. The first is a calendar of the governor's letter-books, and a commission-book kept at Annapolis Royal; the second is a verbatim reprint of the minutes of the council. Together they cover the period between 1713 and 1741. A study of these documents enables me to correct many errors which are confidently repeated in book after book.

It is a thousand pities that neither Longfellow nor Parkman ever saw the country they described, particularly the sites of the old Acadian parishes. Some of their best passages would have gained in vigour and colour. Nova Scotia, "that ill-thriven, hard-visaged, and ill-favoured brat," as Burke called her, is, in fact, largely composed of beauty-spots; and the loveliest part is the long, fertile valley of the

Annapolis lying between the North and South Mountains, "New England idealized" a Yale professor called it, with the scenery of the Connecticut in mind. And of all the valley — the Happy Valley, with its thrifty orchards and fruit farms — the most beautiful part is the old town of Annapolis Royal and its "banlieue."

Grand Pré is classic ground; the great, wind-swept reaches of meadow and marsh-land beside the blue waters of Minas Basin, the desolation of the old French willows about the village well, are haunted with the sense of tears; but Annapolis town with its long, bowery street, its gardens and hedges, is a jewel for beauty and a hundredfold richer in historical associations. I shall never forget my first impression of the "garrison," as the old fort area is still called. The river was full from brim to brim with the red Fundy tide. The farther shore, "the Granville side," showed dim and shadowy and rich. Down the long street came a singing, tambourine-playing detachment of the Salvation Army. It was from that ground that Nicholson's New Englanders advanced in triumph on the fort; there Rednap planted his batteries, and Du Vivier's Indians and Acadians attempted in vain to dislodge old Mascarene from his crumbling ramparts.

On the bridge across the ditch from the main gate,

a boy and girl were talking and laughing as the sun set, making love, I suppose. Here gallant Subercase and his tiny force, after sustaining two sieges, marched out with the honours of war, drums beating and colours flying, between the lines of British grenadiers, when the white flag with the golden lilies came down for the last time on the 16th of October, 1710. In the twilight, a single ghostly sail glided up to the old, ruinous Queen's Wharf. This very defile saw Champlain's sails, Morpain's pirates, the quaint, high-sterned, dumpy craft of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, little French and English armadas of Sedgewick and Phips, La Tour and Charnisay. There at that very landing, the annual supply-ship from England discharged each autumn her nine months' scant allowance for the hungry garrison.

The fort itself is a Vauban plan, with a couple of ravelins added after the British occupation. The French engineers knew how to pick a site. This sandy hill looks over the Annapolis Basin, which defends it on one side, as the marsh and the little Lequille guard the other. The little town crouches in the lee of its defences; but it was sometimes taken in reverse. Within these walls, for forty years, one British governor after another laboured to hold the province for England, planned, diplomatized, held courts of justice, sustained sieges, gathered the king's rents, and

strove to rule Acadie as an English province. Here Governor Armstrong, old and moody, "subject to fits of melancholy," was found dead in his bed with five wounds in his breast from his own sword, so resolute was he to have done with this unprofitable life. The hero of the whole occupation is Paul Mascarene, from the old Huguenot city of Castres. Wise, firm, capable, he has every one's good word. In 1710, he mounted the first guard in the captured fort. Thirty-nine years later, "old and crazy," as the brisk new governor called him, he marched the veterans of Philipps's regiment a hundred miles through the forest, to lay down his powers in the new capital of the province, which was building on the western shore of Chebucto Bay.

This pretty town, with memories of nearly three centuries, marked the headwaters of the stream of Acadian colonization. The original settlers came from lands about Rochelle, and here they found broad flats beside tidal waters, which they tilled as in old France. Between 1670 and 1755, one long lifetime, they increased from some three hundred souls to more than three times as many thousands. Within the shelter of Walpole's long peace, they multiplied rapidly and spread up the river, beside Minas Basin, across the Bay of Fundy.

IV

Their civil organization was mediæval. They were liegemen of their seigneurs, to whom, as well as to the king, they paid annual dues. Acadie was "a feudal colony in America," as Rameau names it. Captured in 1710, Port Royal was only formally ceded to England with the rest of Acadie, by the Treaty of Utrecht. Louis XIV was loath to part with it, for reasons easily understood. Acadie with Cape Breton was the extreme left, as Louisiana was the extreme right, of French power in America. It was nearest to France, the base of supplies, and nearest to the hated *Bostonnais*.¹ Acadie and Cape Breton were the outworks of Quebec, the citadel of New France; and from them it was easiest to strike New England. Ceded, however, the territory was by the twelfth article of this same treaty, which made it impossible that the Acadians could ever have been "neutral French," as they have been called. By international law, then as now, the people go with the territory.

The British governors spent much time in trying to persuade them to take an oath of allegiance, and at last they succeeded; but no oath was necessary. How Louis XIV would have laughed, after the cession of Alsace and Lorraine in 1681, to be told that the

¹ So the Acadians still call the *Bostonnais*, or Americans.

population were now "neutral Germans." When the same provinces were handed back to Germany in 1871, what diplomat would have called their inhabitants "neutral French," or pretended that they were exempt from the necessity of bearing arms against France? Oath, or no oath, the Acadians in 1713 became British subjects, and if French emissaries, military, political, and ecclesiastical, had let them alone, there would have been no Expulsion and no "Evangeline."

The British administration of the province was a curious experiment. A handful of army officers tried to give an alien population civil government. Their efforts, though unsuccessful, illustrate the ingrained British respect for law and for legal forms. All power was vested in the governor and his council. For the greatest part of this period, the governor, Philipps, a peppery old Welshman, who lived to be over ninety, dwelt in England, leaving the province in charge of a lieutenant-governor, who was always an officer in his regiment stationed in the fort. The council's functions were chiefly advisory. The French inhabitants, being Catholics, could not, according to the law of England, vote or enjoy representative institutions.

They did, however, at the command of the governor, elect deputies, six or eight to the district. In order that each in turn might share the honour and burden of office, new deputies were chosen annually, on the

11th of October, when the crops were all in. These representatives of the people were to be men of property, the "ancientest" men, "honest, discreet, and understanding." On election, the new-made deputies were to come to the seat of government, with two of the outgoing members, to receive the governor's approbation and orders. They acted as intermediaries between the Government and the *habitants*, and were responsible for the order and good behaviour of their several districts. They were required to carry out the decisions of the General Court, and enforce the proclamations of the governor. These were read out on Sunday after mass and affixed to the "mass-house" door. Sometimes the deputies had to act as arbitrators and examine disputed lands; or inspect roads and dikes; or assist the surveyor in determining boundaries. They had no powers save those conferred by the Government, but they were a fairly effective lever wherewith to move the mass of the population. British authority was never powerful. At first, it did not extend, in the picturesque phrase of the time, "beyond a cannon-shot from the walls of the fort." As time went on, it became supreme about Annapolis Royal, but it diminished in direct ratio to the distance from the centre. It was weak at Minas, weaker at Cobequid. At Chignecto it had reached the vanishing point.

It is often stated that there was no taxation of the Acadians by the British Government; but such is not the case. By 1730, the seigneurial rights of the various proprietors had been bought up by the Crown, and a determined effort was made to collect, for the benefit of His Britannic Majesty, all quit-rents, homages, and services of whatever kind, formerly paid to their respective seigneurs by the French of Minas and other places on the Bay of Fundy. The legal tender was "Boston money," which the Acadians would not take, preferring the French currency brought in by their clandestine trade with Cape Breton, which was hoarded and sent to Boston to be exchanged. These feudal dues were payable in the old days at the seigneur's mansion, "in kind,"—wheat and capons and partridges.

"Rent-gatherers" were appointed for the different districts. Alexandre Bourg de Bellehumeur, a former seigneur, was "Procureur du Roy" at Minas. He was to render an account twice a year, to keep a rent-roll, to give proper receipts, and to pay over only to duly legalized authorities. He was to pay himself by retaining three shillings out of every pound. All the "contracts" were to be brought in to the governor, so that he might satisfy himself what was legally due in each case. There were naturally refusals, excuses, and delays, but rents were collected. After seven

years, Bourg was replaced by Mangeant, who had fled from Quebec after killing his man in a duel. Three years later, Mangeant left the country, and Bourg was reinstated by Mascarene. Other "rent-gatherers" were Prudent Robichau for Annapolis Royal and the "banlieue," John Duon for the district along the river, and for Chignecto, James O'Neal, surgeon, from Cork, who had studied medicine at the college of Lombard at Paris and married an Acadian girl.

All these "rent-gatherers" were also notaries public. Besides their rent-rolls, they were to keep proper books of account, to take particular notice of all sales and exchanges, by whom and to whom alienated and transferred, to prevent frauds by clandestine deeds of exchange, to notify the Provincial Secretary of all sales, conveyances, mortgages, and agreements of exchange, that they might be properly registered, to report the presence of strangers, and to take cognizance of births, deaths, and wills, that intentions of testators might be duly carried out. This is civil administration in outline. Underlying all is a simple desire to establish law and order and to do justice between man and man.

V

Another erroneous statement frequently made is that the Acadians had few disputes, and those they

brought to their parish priests for settlement. The fact is that these French peasants came to the British power for justice almost as soon as it was established in the land. The beginning of civil, as distinguished from martial, law under British rule is due to the humanity and good sense of a forgotten lieutenant-governor, Thomas Caulfeild. He was apparently a cadet of the noble house of Charlemont, an old soldier who had seen service under Peterborough in Spain. He writes that he is "buried alive" in Nova Scotia, and he dies there in debt incurred in the maintenance of the Government. In a despatch to the Lords of Trade he states that there are no courts of judicature here. Evidently in the opinion of his superior officer, the hot-tempered and overbearing Nicholson, he had exceeded his powers, for Caulfeild writes further that he has tried to suit both parties, but that Nicholson asked to see the commission that authorized him to do justice in civil affairs; "to w^{ch} I answered that as I had y^e Honour to Command in y^e absence of y^e Governor I Should allways endeavour to Cultivate as good an Understanding amongst y^e People as possible believing the same essential for his maj^{ties} Service, and tho' I had no Comⁿ for that Effect yet^t I held myself blamable to Suffer Injustice to be done before me without taking Notice thereof, haveing Never Interposed farther than by y^e Consent of both

Partyes." And he asks for instructions "on that head."

Caulfeild died soon after this, but apparently his suggestion did not fall to the ground. The fifth article of the next governor's commission empowered him "to adjudge and settle all claims and disputes in regard to land in the province." In the Broad Seal commission extending his powers, he is to "settle all questions of inheritance." Accordingly, Philipps writes to the Secretary of State that the governor and council have constituted themselves into a court on the model of the General Court of Virginia, to meet four times a year; for the idea that military government alone prevails, keeps settlers out of the country. Three members of the council were commissioned justices of the peace and empowered "to Examine and Enquire into all Pleas, Debates and Differences that are or may be amongst the inhabitants of Said Province." Ten years later, the governor writes to the notary of Minas regarding the people of that district and other distant parts of the province "coming in daily," with complaints against their neighbors, and failing to warn the "adverse partys" of their intentions. The determination to follow the forms of law and to act fairly is unmistakable even without the express declaration at the end: "I and the gentlemen of the Council have no other Intention than to

do Justice Impartially to you all." Next year he repeats his instructions to Bourg. If the defendants refuse to appear, the plaintiffs are to have certificates from the notary to that effect. The reason given is surely adequate: "The great Charge that persons praying for justice are put to By their Expensive Journeys from Such Remote parts of the Province as Yours."

The preamble to a general proclamation dated January 13, 1737-38, throws further light on the matter. It recites how it has been "customary" hitherto for the inhabitants to come to the governor and council for justice at all times, and, from "Ignorance or Design," fail to summon the defendants. This practice "hath been Exclaimed against by Several of the Inhabitants themselves not only as hurtfull & prejudicial to their private & Domestick affairs to be thus Hurried & Impeded by their Impatient, Cruel & Letigious Neighbours, but even also very Troublesome, fatigueing and Inconvenient to the Governor & Council to be meeting daily and almost constantly to the Prejudice many times of their own Private Affairs to hear and examine their many frivolous and undigested complaints."

The proclamation accordingly fixes four days in the year for the hearing of causes, the first Tuesday in March and May and the last Tuesday in July and

November. This is simply varying the dates fixed by Philipps in 1721. The chief point in the proclamation is an order that plaintiffs must lodge their complaints at the office of the Provincial Secretary and apply to him for the necessary summons to be sent to the defendants, in order that the latter might have at least three weeks' notice of proceedings against them. Again the aim is plainly to make procedure regular and to keep down the number of "frivolous and undigested complaints." That these were a real annoyance is clear from the irritable tone of the wording.

Not only was this administration of justice burdensome and forced upon the council by the nature of the Acadians, but it was carried on for years without fee or reward. In 1738, Armstrong and his council sent an important memorial to Philipps, in which they state that they have to the utmost of their capacity and power endeavoured to discharge their duty by an equal and impartial administration of justice, "Having never had any advantage or Salary for Our Acting as Members of his Majesty's Council for this Province."

These documents, which he never saw, more than justify Parkman in his general statement, "They were vexed with incessant quarrels among themselves arising from the unsettled boundaries of their lands."

Richard, in quoting this passage, asks, "Could it be otherwise when the population was four times as large as it had been in 1713, when these lands had been divided and subdivided so as to leave nothing but morsels, and when the lands had never been surveyed by Government?" Here he is misled by Haliburton, who writes, "They had long since been refused adjudication upon their disputes in the local courts; their boundaries and the titles to their said lands were consequently in great confusion." Both have erred through ignorance of the sources. The truth is the very opposite. The courts did "adjudicate" and their lands were surveyed.

VI

As early as 1728, David Dunbar, Esq., surveyor-general of His Majesty's woods in North America, is made surveyor of His Majesty's woods in Nova Scotia, — a very different place, apparently. His special duty was to set apart lands most fit to produce masts and timber for the royal navy. Dunbar appointed George Mitchell, "gentleman," his deputy. In 1732, Mitchell reported to Governor Armstrong the surveys he had made in the province between the Kennebec and St. Croix Rivers. Six townships had been laid out.

An order of Armstrong's dated July 20, 1733, directs

Mitchell to survey the land on both sides of the Annapolis River, "from the Gutt upwards, Duely Distinguishing the Uninhabited lands from those belonging to the property of any particular person, whose Estates you are also to Survey, and to mark out the uncultivated lands of Each Estate from those that are Improven or inclosed." His discoveries in regard to wood and soil are to be transmitted to the Lords of Trade. Dunbar's instructions to Mitchell to proceed to Annapolis Royal, dated at Boston three years previous, direct him to report to the governor and show his commission and papers. His primary duty as king's surveyor is to select areas of large timber, particularly white pine, for masting, but if the situation of crown lands will interfere with settlements, he is to consult with the governor and report all such cases, duly attested, to Dunbar. He is to keep regular plans carefully in a special book, to make a plan and survey for each grantee, and also a detailed copy of each in the book aforesaid. The survey was intended to be careful and thorough.

Mitchell had a guard of soldiers given him against the Indians, as many as could be spared, and set to work. With the suspicion of peasants, the Acadians opposed the survey, and a special order had to be issued to them, to mark out their boundaries. By April, 1734, Mitchell had completed his task, and

was ordered by Armstrong to continue his work throughout the French settlements, as specified, all round the Bay of Fundy. Mitchell was employed apparently until 1735, after which Lieutenant Amhurst acted as deputy surveyor. In 1739, Shirreff, the secretary, received strict orders from Armstrong to make out no patent except on the survey of Colonel Dunbar or of one of his deputies. The preamble shows that the greatest care was taken with the grants and surveys.

The failure to assist in the work of the survey by planting stakes in their boundaries shows the character of the Acadians. They were French peasants of the eighteenth century, with no little admixture of Indian blood. They were simple, pious, and frugal; but they had the faults of their kind; they were ignorant and uneducated; few could even sign their names. They were led by their priests, who were naturally and inevitably political agents for France. In mental make, they must have been much the same as the peasants described by Arthur Young, except that they were not taxed to death to support a worthless king and court. They had the peasant's hunger for land, the peasant's petty cunning, the peasant's greed, all perfectly comprehensible in view of their hard, narrow life of toil. Their disputes over land were endless. Besides, the Government had

to take action against the use of fraudulent half-bushel measures, against cheating in the length of cord-wood, against "clandestine deeds" and unlawful transfers of land. Proclamations were issued against neglect of fences, and failure to repair dikes. It was necessary to repeat orders frequently, for the obstinacy of the Acadian is proverbial. One ordinance forbade wild young fellows catching the horses loose in the fields and riding them about, to their great injury. Even Acadian boys would be boys. It must have been the dash of Indian blood that drove them to this prank, as it drove others to join Du Vivier against Mascarene, or to capture the vessel that was carrying them away from Acadie, or to live by privateering along the Gulf shore after the Expulsion. The Acadians were not the Arcadians of Raynal and Longfellow. They were human.

The character of the people, however, was hardly a factor in the political problem. Left to themselves, there would have been no problem. Such as it was, the mild, just English rule was solving it. The difficulties arose from the fact that the Acadians were French and Catholic in a province actually British and Protestant. That there should have been constant clashing between the Government and the priests should surprise no one. Grant them human,

with opposing national ends to advance, and the struggle follows as a matter of course.

Reverse the situation. Imagine Massachusetts conquered by France, ceded to her, and Boston held by a weak French garrison, powerless for good or evil, but maintaining a form of government. Imagine the Puritans guaranteed the exercise of their religion, but their ministers subject to the approval of a Vaudreuil or a Bigot. If the French historians, Rameau, Casgrain, Richard, had approached the subject after forming this mental picture, they would have taken a more charitable view of the English treatment of Acadie. One thing is unimaginable — that the men of Massachusetts would not meet and organize and fight.

The difficulty lay deeper still. The Acadians were moved helplessly hither and thither by hands far away in Quebec, in Versailles, in "the high chess game, whereof the pawn are men." They were mere tools of French policy, to be used, broken, and thrown aside in the secular struggle with England for the supremacy of the New World. But who will dare to re-tell the story that Parkman has told once for all?

Thanks to "Evangeline," the Expulsion will never be understood, That poem is responsible for the theory that the measure was a brutal, wanton, motiveless, irrational act of a tyrannical power upon an in-

nocent people; and that power was Great Britain. Ultimately it was the action of the Home Government, for no colonial governor would have incurred the expense, — for it cost money even in the eighteenth century to transport nine thousand people hundreds of miles, — to say nothing of the responsibility, without express orders.

But the plain truth is that New England must share that responsibility. The idea of the “removal” originated with Shirley, and the Governor of Massachusetts was urged repeatedly by him. The actual work of collecting the Acadian at Grand Pré was done by Winslow, a New England man. The firm that chartered the ships to carry them off was the well-known Boston firm of Apthorpe and Hancock. The Expulsion was not a local measure; it was for the defence of New England and all the other British colonies in America, as well as for Nova Scotia. The actual work of removing the unfortunate people was not harshly done. They were protected from the soldiers. As far as possible, families and villages were kept together on the transports.

VII

The Expulsion can be understood only in relation to the larger events of which it was a part. In 1755,

England and France were preparing for the Seven Years' War, the climax of their century of conflict for America. It was a tremendous struggle, though its importance is obscured by the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. It gave England America and India; it drove France from two continents. On this side of the Atlantic, the war had actually begun, for Boscawen had captured the *Alcide* and the *Lys*, and Braddock had been routed on the Monongahela. The war had begun, and begun with a great defeat for England; no one could tell how it would end.

In Nova Scotia, one corner of the world-wide battlefield, the British situation was anything but safe or reassuring. The French population outnumbered the English more than two to one. The great French fortress of Louisbourg was a city of ten thousand inhabitants. Twenty years of labour and millions of livres had been spent on its fortifications, which even in their ruins look formidable. It was the best-defended city in America except Quebec; and it was within easy striking distance of Halifax, the newly founded seat of British power. "The Dunkirk of America," it was stronger than ever, and was receiving supplies constantly from the Acadians.

French emissaries were busy among these unfortunate people, as they had been for forty years, teaching them that they had never ceased to be subjects of

the King of France, that the return of the Pretender would restore Acadie to the French Crown, that remaining under British authority would mean loss of their priests, loss of their sacraments, loss of salvation. The infamous Le Loutre had forced many to retire to French territory, and they were in arms just across the border.

Acadians had joined invading French forces more than once. In view of the inevitable war, the presence of such a population, ten thousand French, at the gates of Halifax, with their Indian allies murdering and scalping just outside the pickets, was a danger of the first magnitude. To disregard it was to court defeat, for the garrison at Halifax was thrust far up into the power of France, a nut in the jaws of a nut-cracker. There was no force to bridle the Acadians. Fair words and fair measures had been exhausted. Nothing remained but to remove them out of the province.

Their deportation was a military necessity. It was cruel, as all war is cruel; the innocent suffered as they do in all war. The measure was precautionary, like cutting down trees and levelling houses outside a fort that expects a siege, to afford the coming foe no shelter, and to give the garrison a clear field of fire.

EVERYBODY'S ALICE

$$\begin{array}{r} 1914 \\ 49 \\ \hline 1865 \end{array}$$

~~End the~~

When the 19th century was about

2/3 along

EVERYBODY'S ALICE

I

EXACTLY forty-nine years ago, a little book was published in London, called "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" which almost at once became a nursery classic. The copy used in the preparation of this discourse bears a recent date. It is the property of a young lady whom I know very well, and whom, as she has kindly allowed me to make the freest use of her treasure and has assisted me in other ways, it is simply my duty to thank publicly. The state of this precious document is, I regret to say, far from satisfactory. It seems to have been very intently if not judiciously studied, if the usual inferences may be drawn from the loosened covers, the dog's-ears, and the thumb-marks along the margins. Several pages are altogether missing, and I should have been at a serious loss in consequence, had it not been for my young friend, who was able from her intimate knowledge of the text, to fill up the gaps in the narrative by oral recitation. From this mutilated copy, I have gleaned the following interesting facts regarding the popu-

larity of this important work. Although appearing in an expensive form, no fewer than eighty-three thousand copies had been sold by 1891. Of a cheaper "people's edition," twenty-four thousand copies were insufficient to supply the demand within four years of the first issue; and the sale still goes on.

More recently it has been published in a still cheaper form for sixpence, not to mention the pirated editions. By this date, nearly half a million copies of the book must be in circulation; and it is safe to say that at least five times that number of children have been made happy by its perusal. Nor is the boon confined to English children. Little Germans may read "Alices Abenteuer im Wunderland"; French children, "Aventures d'Alice au Pays des Merveilles"; and little Italians, "Le Avventure d'Alice nel Paëse delle Meraviglie." In a word, its reputation is ~~European~~ *world wide*.

Nor is it a favourite in the nursery alone; it has penetrated into almost every department of English thought. The periodical press of the last twenty years teems with allusions to this curious production. A quotation from it is almost as readily understood as a tag from "Hamlet"; and the little heroine herself has joined that undying band of shadows, who live only in books and are yet so much more real to us than nine-tenths of the men and women we pass

every day upon the street. The "Saturday Review" is not too cynical, the "Thunderer" too serious, the "Quarterly" too starch, nor the "Nation" too morose to point some of their best sentences with allusions to the sayings or doings of Alice, a child. She has invaded the classroom of the college; and the ordinary course in metaphysics is rather incomplete without her. The prim textbook even admits her within its bounds and is brighter for her presence. The only instance of any objection being raised comes from a very famous city in the West. There, some very wise parent found fault with what may be called the *un*-natural history of the book; and protested against the famous statement about the little crocodile improving his shining tail, as calculated to mislead the infant mind. This is, I fear, too good to be true even for the meridian of Chicago, though we know that very peculiar things do happen in that wonderful city. I am haunted by the fear that this sapient papa or mamma, who wrote to the papers, will upon investigation prove to be only some ingenious reporter short of "copy"; and a good story will be for ever spoiled. Let us hope that this legend will never be subjected to the ordeal of the Higher Criticism. Apart from this, however, there has never been a discordant note in the universal chorus of praise.

II

The question naturally arises, What is the cause of this widespread popularity? What is there in the little book to make it a favourite not only with children everywhere, but with learned professors, busy journalists, men of the world? The book consists of less than two hundred loosely printed pages, and nearly fifty pictures encroach seriously upon the letter-press. Any one can run through it in an hour. Clearly, then, it is not imposing size and solidity which have made it famous. Still less is its theme of a kind to attract general attention. What is it about? To do more than allude to the main outlines of such a classic tale is surely unnecessary, in any English-speaking audience. Every one knows how Alice sat beside her sister on that memorable summer's afternoon when the White Rabbit ran by, looking at his watch; and how she followed him down the rabbit hole, falling and falling, until she landed at last safely in the land of wonders. Every one knows what happened, when Alice drank from the little bottle which had a "mixed flavour of cherry-tart, custard, pine-apple, roast turkey, toffee and hot buttered toast"; and when she and the Mouse met in the Pool of Tears; and when the draggled animals organized the caucus race. It is almost

proof of an imperfect education to be ignorant of how the Rabbit sent in a little bill, how the sententious and short-tempered Caterpillar ordered Alice about and gave her good advice, or how the Duchess and the Cook with the *penchant* for pepper in the soup treated the baby that Alice rescued. A writer is, of course, a privileged person, but there are limits to the liberties he may take, and to assume that to *you*, Gentle Reader, the Mad Tea-Party, the Queen's croquet-ground, the Mock-Turtle's story, the Lobster Quadrille, the trial of the Knave of Hearts are names and nothing more is like insinuating your ignorance of the multiplication-table.

Why the book finds favour with the little ones is no mystery. They have all Alice's preference for a book with pictures and conversation: and here they find both in plenty. The story is a real story. There are no digressions, no repelling paragraphs of solid information, no morals except the delightful aphorisms of the Duchess. Something is continually happening; and that something is always marvellous. Children are the fairest and frankest critics in the world. They have no preconceived notions, no theories of art, no clique politics to hamper their judgments. Of the jargon of criticism they know not a word; but they have by nature a firm grip of the maxim that there is only one style of writing which

is inadmissible, — the tiresome. One infallible rule they apply to their books, "Are they interesting?" No other considerations have the slightest weight with them, not the author's zeal, not his knowledge, not his reputation, not tenderness for his feelings, as when little Anne Thackeray asked her father why he did not write stories like "David Copperfield." To have won their suffrages by a brand-new fairy-tale is an achievement of which any man might be proud. Most nursery legends are seemingly as old as the race and made according to a few well-worn patterns. It is only at the rarest intervals that any addition is made to the small stock of world-wide fable.

The charm which "Alice" possesses for children of a larger growth is more manifold, but still easy to trace out. There are happily many who never quite lose the heart of the child in the grown man or woman, who never grow old, whose souls remain fresh and unhardened after half a century of rough contact with this work-a-day world. They understand the story of the French king who was discovered by the dignified foreign ambassador, playing horse on all fours with some riotous young princelings. Far from being confused, or offering apology, he merely asked the stranger if he were a father, and on learning that he was, said, —

"In that case, we'll have another turn round the room."

Over a child's story-book, they can dream themselves back again into their childhood as Chamisso says, and be all the better for it. Again, "Alice's Adventures" reveals a quite unusual aptitude for being read a second time, and a third, and so on indefinitely. This is not the result of chance. This artlessly artful narrative is the outcome of much thought and labour on the part of the writer; but, as Thoreau says of Carlyle, the filings and sweepings and tools are hidden far away in the workshop and the finished, polished product is all we are permitted to see. Considered merely as a piece of clear, straightforward, idiomatic English, this little book is not unworthy to rank with such masterpieces as "Robinson Crusoe" and "The Pilgrim's Progress." The story runs on so smoothly, the marvels dawn upon us so clearly and succeed one another so swiftly, the interest is so absorbing, that it is only by a strong effort that we can wrench our attention away from the illusion to consider the means by which the illusion is produced. Such books are not made every day. As Sheridan said, "Easy reading is extremely hard writing"; only he employed a more energetic adverb than is agreeable to ears polite. It is, therefore, not surprising to learn that the present story represents

what German critics call an *Überarbeitung*, or working over of previous material, and that the book begun in 1862 was not really finished until three years later.

III

Apart from its fascination as a story and the artistic pleasure arising from the contemplation of skilful workmanship, there are other reasons why grown-up readers find their account in a child's story-book. For one thing, it possesses humour. I do not mean to say that young readers are entirely unaware of its presence in the book. On the contrary, though I speak under correction as one who is not a psychologist, I hold that one of the first faculties the infant mind develops is a sense of humour. Practical jokes, even at their own expense, will make babies laugh long before they can walk or talk; and they soon discover the inexhaustible fun of existence in such a topsy-turvy world as this. At the same time, in their love of the wonderful, young readers hurry over places where the more mature love to dwell. For instance, there was once a kind of book for young persons, now happily extinct, which adopted an insufferably patronizing air; every normal child must have resented it strongly. The condescending tone of these sermonettes is caught

in such a passage as this: Alice hesitates about following the plain direction, "DRINK ME!" on the label of a wonderful bottle.

"No, I'll look first," she said, "and see whether it's marked, 'poison' or not"; for she had read several nice little stories about children who had got burnt, and eaten up by wild beasts, and many other unpleasant things, all because they *would* not remember the simple rules their friends had taught them: such as, that a red-hot poker will burn you if you hold it too long; and that if you cut your finger *very* deeply with a knife, it usually bleeds; and she had never forgotten that, if you drink much from a bottle marked "poison," it is most certain to disagree with you sooner or later.

More obvious is the caricature, when the game is goody-goody little verses, under the tyranny of which so many generations of children groaned in vain. We do not teach our children the "little busy bee" now-a-days. By slow degrees, we have come to see that suggestion of beauty, the charm of word-music, is not thrown away on the young growing mind; and that the best is not too good for the children. A comparison of such a collection as Mrs. Wood's "A Child's First Book of Verse," with any of the old anthologies "For Infant Minds," shows the difference between ancient and modern points of view. Dr. Watts had never been parodied before; but who will deny that he deserved to be? Alice,

after having suffered many rapid and surprising changes in size, is striving to establish to herself her own identity. All her intellectual tests break down. In vain she tries to remember lessons in geography and arithmetic. In vain she attempts to repeat "the little busy bee." The words will not come right.

"How doth the little crocodile
Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile
On every golden scale!

"How cheerfully he seems to grin,
How neatly spreads his claws,
And welcomes little fishes in,
With gently smiling jaws!"

Equally delicious is the parody of Southey's "Father William." Every one knows the improving colloquy between the young man with the inquiring mind and the eccentric sage. It is hard to say which are most absurd, the questions of the young yokel, or the old gentleman's replies.

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head —
Do you think at your age it is right?"

"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,
"I feared it might injure the brain;
But now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."

And so the improving conversation goes on from the question of the back somersault in at the door and the demolition of the goose "with the bones and the beak," to the climax: —

"You are old," said the youth; "one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balance an eel on the end of your nose —
What made you so awfully clever?"

It is only the other day that "Punch" had a set of verses on the German Emperor in the same strain, beginning, —

You are *young*, Kaiser William.

It would not be Wonderland if matters took their natural course; and poor Alice's attempt to recite "The Voice of the Sluggard" is as unfortunate as her former efforts.

"'T is the voice of the Lobster; I heard him declare,
'You have baked me too brown, I must sugar my hair.'
As a duck with its eyelids, so he with his nose
Trims his belt and his buttons, and turns out his toes."

Her audience is anxious for an explanation. "But about his toes?" the Mock-Turtle persisted. "How *could* he turn them out with his nose, you know?" "It's the first position in dancing," Alice said; but

was dreadfully puzzled by it all and longed to change the subject.

I notice that in later editions this immortal stanza is continued, and a second one even added: most unwisely, I should say. Nothing can surpass the exquisite topsy-turviness of the first quatrain. There is just a sufficient show of meaning to lure the mind on, in the hope of finding more. The end of the pleasant teasing is bafflement and agreeably provoking excitement.

There are other points less obvious than these, which the younger generation of readers or listeners is almost sure to miss; but which catch the attention of their elders. It is hardly to be expected that children should see the fun of the Mouse's expedient for drying the bedraggled animals which have just escaped the Pool of Tears. This is to read aloud the driest thing it knows, namely, a passage from a certain famous historian, which our author wickedly quotes *verbatim*. Children will not perceive the satiric intention in the turn given to stock English phrases which have been worn threadbare in everyday use. From human lips, they are simply commonplace; but coming from the curious denizens of Wonderland, they sound irresistibly droll. Such is the remark of the Lory, who clinches an argument with "I am older than you and ought to know better"; and then

positively refuses to tell its age. Such are the set speeches of the Dodo, who is the representative English committee-man. The extract from Hallam fails to dry the Mouse's audience.

"In that case," said the Dodo solemnly, rising to its feet, "I move that the meeting adjourn, for the immediate adoption of more energetic remedies —"

"Speak English!" said the Eaglet. "I don't know the meaning of half those long words, and what's more, I don't believe you do either."

The jeer startles the Dodo out of his pomposity into something like a natural and direct manner of speaking.

"What I was going to say," said the Dodo in an offended tone, "was that the best thing to get us dry would be a Caucus-race."

Admirable, too, is the Dodo's way of meeting the chief difficulty arising from this novel contest. All have won, so all must have prizes, and he solemnly bestows Alice's own thimble upon her, as her prize, with the usual formula, "We beg your acceptance of this elegant thimble." It is not in Wonderland only, I believe, that the recipients of testimonials and addresses and such things are victimized. Nor is the brief dialogue between the old crab and her daughter repeated unfrequently by those who ought to know

better. The Mouse leaves the company in a huff, and the Mamma Crab points the moral:—

“Ah, my dear. Let this be a lesson to you never to lose *your* temper!”

“Hold your tongue, Ma!” said the young Crab a little snappishly. “You’re enough to try the patience of an oyster!”

Again, the excuses made by the Magpie and the Canary, for leaving, after Alice’s unfortunate allusion to her cat “Dinah’s” fondness for birds, are the conventional society excuses, and, like the other citations, of the nature of a formula. The satire is so light and impersonal that the correction is made without offence.

The satiric intention is plainly to be seen in the ~~summary of the arguments brought forward by the King, the Queen, and the Executioner regarding the Cheshire Cat.~~ This remarkable animal had a trick of grinning persistently; and besides, a habit of vanishing gradually, and appearing in the same manner. The manifestations began with the tail and ended with the grin, or contrariwise. Sometimes the grin was visible for some time after the cat had disappeared. Once the King of Hearts wished to have the Cat removed, and his royal Consort met the difficulty, as was her custom, by ordering its immediate execution. But this was easier said than done.

The Executioner's argument was, that you could n't cut off a head unless there was a body to cut it off from; that he had never had to do such a thing before, and he was n't going to begin at *his* time of life.

The King's argument was, that anything that had a head could be beheaded, and that you were n't to talk nonsense.

The Queen's argument was, that if something was n't done about it in less than no time, she'd have everybody executed all round.

Here the philosopher glances at many arguments just as sapient.

IV

Forty-nine years is really a very respectable span of life for a book. It has outlasted a whole generation of mankind, and seen many revolutions in the world of thought and outward human activity. Three more decades of such swift and sweeping changes, and the book will need footnotes and explanations. Who knows but some day a Doctor of Philosophy may edit it with various Prolegomena and complete *apparatus criticus*; or some Oxford man get his research degree by a thesis on it. Even now some of the allusions need clearing up; for example, those relating to the game of croquet. This gentle joyous field-sport is classed among athletic pursuits by university students in France, but elsewhere it has been driven

out by tennis and golf till its memory is in danger of perishing. Many of the younger generation have not even seen the game, much less played it. I have done both and am therefore entitled to an opinion on its merits. And I think all those of ripe experience will bear me out in my assertions regarding croquet. It is the curious property of certain games to arouse corresponding feelings in the human breast. Cricket, for instance, arouses generous rivalry, bumble-puppy the desire for polite conversation, and modern football the homicidal instincts of the primitive man. But of all the inventions of the Enemy, commend me to croquet. It was simply impossible to play the game and preserve your self-respect. Every time you left the ground, your moral nature was in a more dishevelled, tattered condition than when you went on. The facilities which this insidious amusement provided for unfair play were so many and so secure that it was not in poor fallen human nature to withstand them. Again, I am willing to believe that there have been instances of croquet being played in perfect good temper; but I have never witnessed the games myself or conversed with any one who had. On the other hand, I have seen a mature and blameless matron try to settle a dispute with a husband to whom she was devotedly attached — by means of her mallet. The worst of it was, that the game was

a disease, a mania; the croquet microbe swept over the whole land, and no constitution was strong enough to resist its attacks. Sometimes we think that the world is at a standstill and despair of any moral progress whatever. At such times, we should remember that croquet has fled before the advance of civilization. The description of the game as played in Wonderland is hardly exaggerated: —

The players all played at once without waiting for turns, quarrelling all the while, and fighting for the hedgehogs; and in a very short time the Queen was in a furious passion, and went stamping about and shouting, "Off with his head!" or "Off with her head!" about once in a minute.

There is another English institution of greater antiquity and much more venerable than croquet, our invaluable system of Trial by Jury. Every now and then there is an agitation to abolish it, and every satirist has his fling at it. Dickens, in the famous case of *Bardell vs. Pickwick*, aims his darts chiefly at the methods of the opposing counsel. The climax of Alice's adventures is the trial of the Knave of Hearts upon the historic charge of stealing the tarts; the judge and jury have the trial to themselves; and their ways are peculiar.

The twelve jurors were all writing very busily on slates. "What are they all doing?" Alice whispered to

the Gryphon. "They can't have anything to put down yet, before the trial's begun."

"They're putting down their names," the Gryphon whispered in reply, "for fear they should forget them before the end of the trial."

The average juryman has not a very good name for intelligence and often has to meet the charge of muddling evidence. Perhaps no more lively way of exhibiting this failing than the Wonderland jury's mode of dealing with important testimony.

The first witness was the Hatter. He came in with a teacup in one hand and a piece of bread-and-butter in the other. "I beg pardon, Your Majesty," he began, "for bringing these in; but I had n't quite finished my tea when I was sent for."

"You ought to have finished," said the King. "When did you begin?"

The Hatter looked at the March Hare, who had followed him into the court, arm-in-arm with the Dormouse. "Fourteenth of March, I *think* it was," he said.

"Fifteenth," said the March Hare;

"Sixteenth," said the Dormouse;

"Write that down," the King said to the jury, and the jury eagerly wrote down all three dates on their slates, and then added them up, and reduced the answer to shilling and pence.

This is, of course, but a concrete way of representing the confusion in the mind of the average citizen in the jury-box. A child can grasp the fact, when put

in this way. It would be pleasant to dwell on the other humours of the trial, but it is better to send the curious to the book itself. The Judge's inclination for Jedwood justice, — verdict first, trial afterward, — his futile facetiousness, his brilliant interpretation of documentary evidence, the suppression of the guinea-pigs, the contumacy of the Cook, who refused to testify, are too good to be spoiled by compression and must be read in the original. But one part seems to have been written in anticipation of the Dreyfus trial and the part played in it by the famous *bordereau*.

"There's more evidence to come yet, please Your Majesty," said the White Rabbit, jumping up in a great hurry: "This paper has just been picked up."

"What's in it?" said the Queen.

"I have n't opened it yet," said the White Rabbit, "but it seems to be a letter, written by the prisoner to — to somebody."

"It must have been that," said the King, "unless it was written to nobody, which is n't usual, you know."

"Who is it directed to?" said one of the jurymen.

"It is n't directed at all," said the White Rabbit; "in fact, there's nothing written on the *outside*." He unfolded the letter as he spoke, and added — "It is n't a letter after all: it's a set of verses."

"Are they in the prisoner's handwriting?" asked another of the jurymen.

"No, they're not," said the White Rabbit, "and that's the queerest thing about it." (The jury all looked puzzled.)

"He must have imitated somebody else's hand," said the King. (The jury all brightened up again.)

"Please Your Majesty," said the Knave, "I did n't write it, and they can't prove that I did: there's no name signed at the end."

"If you did n't sign it," said the King, "that only makes the matter worse. You *must* have meant mischief, or you'd have signed your name like an honest man."

All these flashes of fun do not by themselves make up the book. Apart from veiled and gentle satire, there is another humorous element which can be enjoyed by young and old alike, — I am speaking of English stock. This is the incongruous in words, the absurd, or nonsense. This is language where faint, illusory mirages of meaning vanish, language which triumphantly resists all efforts at logical analysis and sometimes even parsing. For three centuries it has formed part of our intellectual bill-of-fare. Shakespeare, who is such a thoroughly national poet, is very fond of this device. Witness Bottom's "Raging rocks," etc., and above all Ancient Pistol's nice "derangement of epitaphs," as in the famous skit on Marlowe. "These be good humours, indeed!" Ancient Pistol is surely the true great-great-very-great-grandfather of Mrs. Malaprop, whose views on female education are so well known.

As good an instance as any is Touchstone's mystification of the country boy, Corin.

Corin. And how like you this shepherd's life, Master Touchstone?

Touch. Truly, shepherd, in respect of itself, it is a good life, but in respect that it is a shepherd's life, it is naught. In respect that it is solitary, I like it very well; but in respect that it is private, it is a very vile life. Now, in respect that it is in the fields, it pleaseth me well; but in respect it is not of the Court, it is tedious. As it is a spare life, look you, it fits my humour well; but, as there is no more plenty in it, it goes against my stomach.

The Duchess runs Touchstone close when she gives Alice this piece of excellent advice: —

“Be what you would seem to be,—or, if you'd like it put more simply,—never imagine yourself not to be otherwise than what it might appear to others that what you were or might have been was not otherwise than what you had been would have appeared to them to be otherwise.”

Most of us will share Alice's bewilderment over this oracular saying, and agree that it would be much easier to follow if it were written down; and rejoice that the Duchess did not carry out her threat, “That's nothing to what I could say if I chose.”

There is wisdom as well as wit in this nursery classic. Indeed, it was a professor of metaphysics who described it as “a wise little book.” The Duchess, as we know, is very fond of finding morals in everything; sometimes she evolves mere incongruities, but

sometimes she hits the mark with a maxim of universal importance. By the simple misplacement of a letter or two, she lifts the familiar old adage which recommends economy in small things into another and equally important sphere. The nation of shopkeepers expressed the result of long experience and observation in this tenet of proverbial philosophy, "Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves." At a single stroke, the Duchess transformed the musty proverb and widened its application a thousandfold. "Take care of the *sense*, and the sounds will take care of themselves." If only public speakers, reciters, orators, political debaters, lecturers, preachers, and professors would attend to this fundamental precept, what verbiage should we not be spared! If on everyday matters, people paid more attention to the matter than to the manner of their discourse, how much spite, gossip, and scandal would cease! But how our social intercourse would be curtailed! If we made this a rule of life, could we maintain clubs, or organize afternoon teas?

In truth, underneath all this surface sparkle of wit, and fun, grotesque, and incongruity flows a deep serene current of true wisdom. Without the second, the first is impossible. "It takes a wise man to play the fool."

V

From still another point of view, this child's story-book has what may without exaggeration be called a scientific importance. A German psychologist might call it "Ein beitrage zur Psychologie des Träumens," or a contribution to our knowledge of the phenomena of dreaming. Perhaps the most widely observed and most puzzling of all mental phenomena are the phenomena of dreaming. All peoples, all literatures have noted and recorded them. Except in rare instances they are the most difficult to recall or to fix. "As a dream when one awaketh," says the text, in order to compare two of the most fleeting and evanescent of things. "I have had a most rare vision," says Bottom the weaver. "I have had a dream — past the wit of man to say what dream it was. . . . Methought I was — there is no man can tell what. Methought I was, — and methought I had, — but man is but a patched fool, if he will offer to say what methought I had." Dreams are vivid enough; but how hard to recall them when our senses are completely alert. Sometimes we can re-tell these strange freaks of subconsciousness; but this is not the rule, rather the exception. The main outlines we may retrace; but the details, the attending circumstances, the atmosphere of

reality in which the marvels took place, escape us altogether. How can we make words give back impressions so vivid, so confused, so seeming real at the time, so unreal afterwards? Yet this most difficult literary feat is accomplished by this child's story-book. The child does not perceive this, is not, in fact, meant to perceive this; but even a hasty analysis will make the author's intention clear.

In the first place, the border-line between consciousness and unconsciousness is very faint and hard to define. The process of transition from the one estate to the other is gradual. In the book, the illusion is produced by the closest mimicry of reality. A tired little girl, on a hot summer's afternoon, is resting on a bank beside her sister, when she sees a white rabbit run by. The scene is in England where the "bunnies" range freely through the fields. There is nothing more common than the sight. Alice is still awake; but when she sees the creature take his watch out of his waistcoat pocket, the line between asleep and awake has been crossed. The dreaming has begun, but it is only in the last chapter when her sister speaks to Alice that we are actually told that this is a dream, "a most rare vision." True to experience also is the sensation of falling which so soon follows: this is produced, observers say, by the stretching of the foot an inch or two. In dreams we always fall

slowly, and feel that we can control the motion. In falling down the rabbit-hole, Alice has time to take jam-pots out of cupboards, to replace them in other cupboards farther down, and even to curtsy as she descends. Admirably accurate also is the short cross-current of thought, where the remembrance of Dinah, her cat, diverts the progress of the main dream.

Once Alice is fairly afoot in Wonderland, marvels thicken. A whole pack of cards take part in the story. Gryphons and Mock-Turtles dance the lobster quadrille. Croquet is played with live flamingoes for mallets, and live hedgehogs for balls. In the mind of Alice, two feelings alternate, — calm acceptance of the marvellous as perfectly natural, and the faint protest of reason against the strange happenings, or, perhaps I should say, the attempt to rationalize them. Sudden appearances or unexplained disappearances, events however strange, do not surprise us in the world of dreams, but generally the mind makes an effort to relate them to ordinary experience. When the White Rabbit mistakes Alice for the housemaid, and sends her off for his gloves, she obeys, but is not surprised. Only by degrees does the oddity of the situation dawn upon her.

“How queer it seems,” Alice said to herself, “to be going messages for a rabbit! I suppose Dinah ’ll be sending me on messages next!” And she began fancying the

sort of thing that would happen: "Miss Alice! come here directly, and get ready for your walk!" "Coming in a minute, nurse! but I've got to watch this mouse-hole till Dinah comes back and see that the mouse does n't get out! Only I don't think," Alice went on, "that they'd let Dinah stop in the house, if it began ordering people about like that."

Another constant phenomenon of dream life, which is most vividly portrayed, is the inexplicable way images present themselves, and then fade into nothingness. Alice is going to play croquet; she finds a live flamingo in her hands; a little later, the game is over, and no more mention is made of it. Neither its coming nor its going is explained. Nor is there felt to be any need of explanation. Everything happens in accordance with a new set of laws, which govern this strange mental state in which the absurd is accepted as the real. The most famous instance is the Cheshire Cat, whose grin appeared long before the rest of the animal, and remained when all else of it had vanished. And our author follows his own maxim, "Adventures first; explanations take such a dreadful time."

Another well-known sensation of dreaming is the wilful opposition, the malicious contrariety of things. For instance, you dream that you are going on a journey; you get to the station or the steamer and find that your luggage has not come; or you get into the wrong train, or (my own favourite nightmare)

you have n't money enough to buy your ticket. So Alice is ordered about by the animals, made to repeat lessons and verses, snubbed by the Caterpillar, bored by the Duchess. Allied to this, or another phase of it, is what may be called reaching out after the unattainable. You wish to go somewhere, or to do something, and find yourself perpetually balked and disappointed. Alice sees, through the little door, the beautiful garden, with its fountains and flowers; but she is too large to squeeze through, and when she is small enough, the key that will admit her is on the glass table out of her reach. It is a pleasure to the reader, when, after many mischances, she at last finds her way into that Enchanted Ground.

Interesting, too, and true to fact, is the concrete way in which the return to consciousness is pictured. There is first the return of courage, and then, of reason half alert and working drowsily. Poor Alice has been tremendously bullied and made to feel literally very small; but at last she feels herself regaining her natural size. Then the formalities of the court-room, the fury of the Queen have no terrors for her.

"Hold your tongue!" said the Queen, turning purple.

"I won't," said Alice.

"Off with her head!" the Queen shouted at the top of her voice. Nobody moved.

"Who cares for *you*?" said Alice (for she had grown

to her full size by this time). "You 're nothing but a pack of cards!"

At this, the whole pack rose up into the air, and came flying down upon her; she gave a little scream, half of fright and half of anger, and tried to beat them off, and found herself lying on the bank, with her head in the lap of her sister, who was gently brushing away some dead leaves that had fluttered down from the trees upon her face.

This is as faithfully observed as it is admirably worded. Every one knows how a noise or slight accident has the power to suggest, in some cases, an entire dream. Here the falling of the leaves on the child's face suggests the assault of the cards; and the trifling fright and effort to defend herself effectually arouse her. Of course, to describe the fairy-tale as a scientific treatise would be to do it an injury; but that the fairy-tale has this solid framework of sound observation it is impossible to deny.

What has been said will go far to account for "Alice's"} great and ever-increasing popularity. There is a very great difference between careful and flimsy work; and in order to value the "Alice" books rightly, it is only necessary to examine any one of the hundred melancholy imitations of them; for there is a definite type or fashion of child's story brought into existence by their originality and freshness. Photographers have so perfected their art

that the different motions of a bird on the wing, of a horse in full gallop, of a bullet from the muzzle of a rifle, are caught and fixed to the most minute detail. Our author has triumphed over difficulties almost as great. He has made words, simple words that children understand and delight in, do the work of the sensitive plates. They have caught and they hold in cold print those fleeting impressions of an experience, which though universal is the hardest to make comprehensible. The process of dreaming is, as it were, arrested at various stages, and we have time to examine each of them as clearly as we care to. Under correction, be it stated, nothing better in this kind exists.

VI

Apt as the mere words are, and cunningly as they are joined together, they would miss something of their effect without the pictures. As Alice thought, "What *is* the use of a book without pictures and conversations?" Indeed, it is almost impossible to imagine "Alice," without the illustrations. Pictures are not always an aid to the understanding of books; very often, they only spoil one's ideas; the illustrated books which are unqualified successes are very rare. But in this case the talent of the artist has been so happily inspired by the talent of the

writer that each heightens the effect produced by the other.

The artist is the second, not the first, but he has entered so thoroughly into the spirit of the text that his interpretation is well-nigh perfect. Without him, we should never have realized to the full the delightful fatuity of the King of Hearts, or the ferocity of his terrible consort with the *penchant* for beheading all who offended her, or the fussiness of "Brer Rabbit," or the immense dignity of the Caterpillar. His skilful pencil has created a whole gallery of portraits. There is the March Hare with the wisp of hay about his ears, and the Hatter with the advertising ticket on his "topper": the wild light in their eyes tells the tale of their insanity. In striking contrast to their eccentric demeanour is the reposeful manner of the Dormouse, whose ideal of life has been so admirably summed up as "Nuts ready cracked, and between nuts, sleep." Here are many ingenious turns in the plates. The most original conception of all is the melancholy Mock-Turtle who was once a real turtle. For this the artist found no hint in the text; so he grafted the head, tail, and hind legs of a calf on the carapace and fore-flippers of a tortoise; and a more woe-begone beast it would be hard to find in fact or fable. I have always wanted to know Ruskin's opinion of the Gryphon, having in mind his famous crit-

icism of the Lombardic and Renaissance griffins in "Modern Painters." Are the lion and eagle natures perfectly fused in it? Would the motion of this creature's wings give it the earache? In my humble judgment, it seems a most satisfactory result of the constructive imagination. As he lies asleep, in the way of Alice and the Duchess, he looks like a coiled steel spring. When his hand is perfectly free, our artist is perhaps even more amusing. The humours of the trial scene are almost wholly original and admirable, the finest, perhaps, being the portraits of the counsel, — an eagle, a crow, and a parrot, all in barrister's robes and wigs. In the second part of the trial, where the King-Judge is explaining so lucidly to the jury the verses imputed to the Knave, all the lawyers are sound asleep. Most of all are we grateful for the pictures of Alice. She is not a perfect heroine. She has her little tempers, is not exactly philosophical in distress; nor is she altogether free from certain affectations and a desire to show off. But this is the worst that can be said of her. She is a capital representative of the finest race of children in the world, a substantial, graceful, well-groomed, innocent, fresh-faced little English lass, "And sweet as English air could make her." There is a certain national primness in all her attitudes, suggestive of nursery governesses and extremely well-regulated families. She is a little gentle-

woman, never forgetting her manners. The finest grotesque, to my mind, is the picture in which she appears with the baby in her arms that turned, dream-fashion, into a pig. The contrast between the sweet, shy, wondering face of the lovely child and the smug vulgarity of the little porker's phiz is simply delightful. It is Titania, Queen of the Fairies, caressing Nick Bottom the weaver, over again. Memorable, also, is Alice's comment on the transformation: —

“If it had grown up,” she said to herself, “it would have made a dreadfully ugly child; but it makes rather a handsome pig, I think.” And she began thinking over other children she knew, who might do very well as pigs.

And who is the artist? Some young lady, with a talent for draughtsmanship? Some student in the Academy schools? Not at all. The illustrator of this child's story-book is the veteran artist, Sir John Tenniel, who for forty years probably did as much as any one man to form English opinion on political and social questions. For forty years his cartoons had the place of honour in “Punch.” They have been collected in two volumes, and constitute a pictorial history of the period. They have noticeably increased, not fallen off in power, and some of them, such as “General Février turned Traitor,” on the death of Czar Nicholas, and “Dropping the

Pilot," on the dismissal of Bismarck, are of European interest and importance. His portrait shows a worn, hard face, rather stern, like that of a general who had seen many campaigns. It seems like condescension for an artist of this importance to make pictures for children; but Tenniel did not think it beneath him. The opinion of Mr. Pennell, who is well qualified to judge, is that, from the artist's point of view, Tenniel's Alice drawings are his very best work.

VII

Of a more important personage still, that is to say, the author himself, I have, as the scientific gentleman said at the christening, no facts to communicate; or at least very few. Every one knows that he was a mathematical Don at the most aristocratic college in Oxford; and that Lewis Carroll is merely a pen-name, well exchanged for his real, jaw-breaking, patronymic, Dodgson. In private life, he was most pleasant and unassuming. An old bachelor, he was a most devoted friend of children, delighting to entertain them in his rooms, getting up plays for them to act, and keeping elaborate mechanical toys for their amusement. He seems to have been a recluse, representing the most conservative, not to say reactionary, Oxford type of scholar. He avoided notoriety, did not write for the

magazines, was never interviewed. Nine men out of ten, on making such a hit as "Alice," would be tempted to rush at once into the market with hasty replicas of his first success. But Lewis Carroll did no such thing: he waited, and in thirty years, wrote just two other similar books. It is surprising how little is known about him: a biography has been published since his death, but the further facts contained are astonishingly few and unimportant. But little more is needed to make him known to us. The man who created Alice and told the tale of her adventures is a brother to all the world. We know him as well as if we had lived under the same roof with him. To me, the most striking fact is his devotion to mathematics, "the hard-grained muses of the cube and square." In fact, I am almost tempted to open a digression, after the manner of Swift, on the ways and traits of mathematicians. I have known one or two of first-rate ability and I have heard traditions of the demi-gods of the science. The popular notion of the mathematician is a Mr. Dry-as-dust, constructed out of conic sections and talking in algebraic formulæ. My observation runs traverse to all this. The most salient feature in their characters is mirthfulness, not to say frivolity. One Canadian who went to the greatest university on the Continent, and straightway solved some problems which had puzzled the professors

themselves, is known in private life as an irrepressible punster and practical joker. It is the reaction, I suppose, from the strain of abstruse thought. The greatest of them all, Sylvester, though verging on three-score and ten, had a weakness for writing tender verses to young ladies.

We had — alas! we have no longer — in our own little college a fine example of mathematical mirthfulness. He was not more famous for his ability as a teacher than for his genial wit, his good sayings, sometimes rather caustic, to say nothing of his skill in chess, in whist, with the flute, and with the fishing-rod. No more convincing instance could be found of the exhilarating influence of lifelong mathematical study. It is enough to make us forswear every other pursuit and branch of learning. Lewis Carroll had this gift of humour of a very rare and delicate kind, and a polished Oxonian wit, like Melissa's "hitting all . . . with shafts of gentle satire, kin to charity!" His book is sufficient proof of this; and there are confirmatory tales like those of the French king already cited.

The real man, the essence of his character, comes out in an after note, the appendix called "The Easter Greeting," first printed in 1876. Few noted it, or perceived its significance. Here, speaking in his own

person, our author lays bare his own motives, and reveals unsuspected riches of character. Its tenor may be known from one extract: —

And if I have written anything to add to those stores of innocent and healthy amusement that are laid up in books for the children I love so well, it is surely something I may hope to look back upon without shame and sorrow (as how much of life must be then recalled!) when my turn comes to walk through the valley of shadows.

Not then, as a mere *jeu d'esprit* of a busy thinker, not merely as a diversion of the nursery, are we to regard this tale of Wonderland! To the author, the book is a serious effort, an achievement; and we may well adopt his point of view; for the significance of it lies deep. It is in fact one symptom of a great change which has taken place about us silently, almost without our knowledge, a change in our attitude toward the child. The child's book of the Early Victorian type was severely improving. It still retained the impress of "Sandford and Merton." Its aim was to improve the child's mind by informing him of certain facts or his morals by preaching at him. Whatever jam there might be was rather poor and acid, and never really disguised the taste of the pills. The books most in favour were, frankly, twaddle like the inexpressible "Beechnut" and "Rollo" types, or cheerful

little tales of very good little boys and girls, who were so very, very good, that they died very young — to the mingled distress and edification of parents and friends. The old notion was, apparently, that anything was good enough for children. Though wit, grace, humour, harmony, beauty might be good for grown people, the proper elements for the tender, sensitive intelligence, in process of growth, was dulness; cheap books, in every sense, ill-written, worse printed, with a few coarse wood-cuts, filled the nursery shelf. The change the last fifty years has seen in the reading matter for children amounts to a revolution. Consider, for a moment, the portent of our foremost English critic, Andrew Lang, editing, with the help of many scholars, a series of fairy-tales for children; of Tennyson writing verses for them; of the most skilful artists in the land making pictures for them. Think of the magazines for their exclusive benefit; of the annual output of books made especially for the little ones; and it begins to dawn upon us that this is the children's age. These things would have been regarded as absurd a century ago, when children were regarded, more or less, as a necessary nuisance. Now, the true absurdity lies in failing to study, to understand, and rightly to educate the child. To neglect the child is to check the progress of the race. In the school as well as in the home, this great change is manifest. The

rise, growth, and extension of the kindergarten system has had a most beneficial effect on the science of education and on philosophy. This new attitude toward childhood is one of the most important ideas the nineteenth century acquired and handed on.

Pessimists talk gloomily of coming evils, loss of faith, the madness, misery, and sin of the masses, the weakness of governments everywhere, the greed and insolent power of capital; and there is evil enough at our very doors to make the most selfish and comfortable and unthinking of us ill at ease at times. But there are great and subtle forces working silently about us for good. A living book is a great power. Ruskin says that the imagination in its play is either mournful or mischievous; and that it is a most difficult thing to invent a fairy-tale which is neither the one nor the other. But this, Lewis Carroll has done. His book has influenced and will influence hundreds and thousands of children; and that influence can only be for good. His own attitude toward the work of his hand is most significant. Tiny and humble as the book may seem, almost unimportant, it manifests the spirit of a very wise Teacher, who spoke many weighty words, but kept his tenderest for the little children.

VIRGIL

VIRGIL

O degli altri poeti onor' e lume

I

IF it be written, as Capulet's servant avers, that the shoemaker should meddle with his yard, and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his pencil, and the painter with his nets, no lengthened apology is necessary for a teacher of English who meddles with Virgil. Besides, I hope to show that the relation of Virgil to English literature is closer than is generally suspected, and, by so doing, explain and justify my presence in this particular classical galley. In order to make my position quite clear, I must risk the reproach of egotism and offer frankly some autobiographic details, believing as I do that my experience, in part at least, is typical. I speak as a Canadian to Canadians.

At a certain stage of his journey through the wilderness of this world, the pilgrim I know most about lighted upon a Canadian High School, and began the study of Latin. He learned to *con mensa, mensæ* in Harkness, and went through declension and conjugation in the orthodox way, writing prose exercises and translating easy sentences until the time came to at-

tack a real author. To this day he remembers the point in the dark backward and abysm of time, when he was confronted with the page of Virgil containing the lesson for the coming day. The volume had come down to him from his father's school-days, and was in fact the text which the learned Carolus Ruæus, S.J., prepared for the use of His Serene Highness, the Dauphin of France, in the seventeenth century, *vita, interpretatio, notæ, index vocabulorum*, and all. The lesson was a few lines of the second "Æneid," and to this day I recall vividly the baffled feeling, when face to face with the text. I felt that there was a meaning in those words, if it could only be got at; but they seemed all the same. There appeared to be no way of distinguishing them. They might have been a uniformed Roman legion, close-ranked in battle array, determined to keep out the Northern barbarian, or a labyrinth of grey boulders all the same shape and size, a labyrinth without a silken clue, without an Ariadne. Little by little the path opened, and the tale of Troy divine, as Father Æneas discoursed it from his lofty couch, took form and awakened interest. In spite of this particular pupil's idleness and lack of proper instruction, he could not altogether miss the subtle charm of the Roman poet's grand style. Dull as he was, he did not altogether fail to catch the penetrating Virgilian cry in the moving tale of the Sea-

priest and his sons, and the phrase — *parva duorum Corpora natorum* — touched him with its pathos and could not be shaken from the memory. But it was many a long day before he was to attain to anything like a just appreciation of the poet or his work.

One reason for this is that the merits of Cæsar and Horace are more to the taste of the average boy than the peculiar excellence of the great Mantuan. A stirring story told in crisp soldier fashion, and well-bred man-of-the-world sentiment, wit, or playfulness, are much more likely to impress the unformed mind than the dignity of the great Virgilian style, or the tenderness and nobility of the Virgilian thought. Not that I realized then why I took but little interest in Virgil: but looking back from the man's point of view to the boy's, I can understand it now. Another reason lay in the teaching. I do not wish to disparage my teachers. They were both honest, painstaking men, who did their duty by us. I remember them with affection, but I still have something of a grudge against them, that they did not give us the guidance really needed. How we acquired them I cannot say, but the notion certainly did prevail in the class that the only reasons why any one should study Latin were that it was required for examinations, and helped druggists to read the labels on their jars. The trouble

was that we never saw the wood for the trees. Latin words we studied; but Latin literature, never. Syntax, grammar, scansion, there was, good measure, pressed down, heaped together, and running over; but real feeling for the language there was not. Still less was there any feeling for style. And I am afraid that in twenty years there has been little improvement. Only last summer I heard a lesson in Virgil in a model Ontarian High School; and it had both the excellences and the defects of the system under which I was trained. The fault does not really lie at the door of the teachers. It is a lamentable fact that the English tradition of elegant classical scholarship has never really taken root in this country, and the study of Greek and Latin literature has had to make head against the crude democratic demand for immediate utility, which means for an educational article which can be, as soon as possible, turned into dollars and cents. The cause of education in our country could hardly be better served than by leavening our Canadian schools with some scores of Oxford men. This is, of course, easier said than done. The healthy Canadian youth objects to being patronized; the Oxonian is a delicate exotic, hard to acclimatize; and above all, first-class men are few. The happiest solution would be obtaining Canadian teachers with English training. Something has been done already. The

recent drawing together of our foremost Canadian university and the two famous homes of English culture by the Isis and the Cam, will set a stream of student emigration flowing from west to east, from which only good can come.

Before leaving the topic of schools and school-masters, I wish to say a word of a third teacher, whom every old pupil of a certain collegiate institute will recognize under the pseudonym of "Barbarossa." His peculiarity was the possession of a relentless driving power, for which at least one old pupil is grateful. There was a book of Latin prose exercises, of which the mystic number seventy had to be prepared for a certain examination. At this distance of time, it seems to me as if every one of those seventy exercises was written on the blackboard, under his eagle eye, unto seventy times seven. Besides the knowledge this process brought of some scandal about that gross materialist Balbus, who lived to eat, and besides the permanent acquisition of some golden phrases like *Negari non potest*, and *Non est dubium quin*, it is plain that the training was useful for something more than passing examinations. To those hours of unrelaxing drill must be credited the fixing in my mind of a considerable vocabulary and of a feeling for sentence-structure. Should this ever meet his eye, he may feel assured that one "unprofitable grammarian,"

as old Harrison has it, is thankful for having been forced to work.

On reaching the university, I found there a system which forced men to specialize from the beginning of their course, and, worse than that, formed the specialists into opposite camps, Classics, Moderns, Mathematics, Natural Science, and Metaphysics. Naturally where the kinship was closest, the feud was most bitter, and the battle raged chiefly between the partizans of the old literature and of the new. None of us, in our simplicity, seemed to be aware that the quarrel was two hundred years old, and that the last gun had been fired by a certain satirical Dean of St. Patrick's. With the impetuosity of the undergrad, I threw up my cap for the Moderns, and defended them against all comers for several years, confirmed in my heretical idea that between the two branches of European literature there was an irrepressible conflict, and that new lamps were better than old. Nobody told me that European literature, like European history, is one, and that the end is not comprehensible without the beginning. Other interests crowded the classics to one side for a long time. With some inkling of the beauty of the "Eclogues," two "Georgics," and two "Æneids," I left Virgil behind me at the university, practically a book with seven seals.

The process of awakening was a curious one. The

specializing bent remained and worked out its way, but happily, it is impossible to study modern languages, at any school for specialists, without keeping up more than a bowing acquaintance with the forms of Latin; and, though literature suffered, touch with the language was not altogether lost. At last, what may perhaps be called a happy accident led me back to Virgil. One night in the middle of a severe bout of examination-paper reading, I chanced upon a quotation from the "Æneid." I opened a long-disused school Virgil to verify the reference, but as that one leaf was torn across I could not find it, and struck into the middle of the wonderful Fourth Book. I found that I could get the meaning without trouble, and that that tale of Dido's passion was absolutely fascinating. It was in a state of enthusiasm that I reached the famous

Vixi, et quem dederat cursum Fortuna peregi,

which has thrilled many a reader before and since Jane Baillie Welsh, aged nine, sacrificed her beloved doll in the character of Dido on a pyre of lead-pencils and sticks of cinnamon. From that night I became a Virgilian, perhaps deserving at times the reproach addressed to the young monk who found undue pleasure in the works of the pagan author. From that time my interest burnt like a flame, and the many hours

spent on the beggarly elements of Latin grammar and Latin prose now yielded a rich if far-off interest of literary pleasure. For a long summer holiday Virgil was my constant companion. Much of his poetry was read under skies as blue and splendid as those that overarch his own beloved Parthenope, and in the music of his verse I shall always hear the soft breathing of summer airs through evergreens, and the washing of the ripple against a granite shore.

Reading the bare text without note or comment of any kind, I found many questions cropping up which I could put to myself but which I could not answer — in regard chiefly to the personality of the author, to his sources, to Roman culture, to Roman religion, to epic poetry. These had to wait until I could get back to books, when I found in Conington's scholarly edition and Sellar's sane, close-knit and learned monograph the guidance I required, and in the essay of Myers, such praise of my author as did my heart good, and as I felt accorded him justice. In these and other books which might be named, students will find ample learning, vouched for by scholars of world-wide fame. I speak in no sense as a classic, as one with authority, but as a barbarian to fellow barbarians. My crude notions may call up a gravely amused and tolerant smile to the lips of the professed priests and guardians of the classical mysteries. This is a

record of personal experience, a series of confidences set forth in the hope that others who have also wandered in darkness may feel encouraged to grope forward to the light.

II

At the outset, I wish in the most solemn and public manner to abjure and renounce the pestilent heresy which had long been losing its hold upon me, that there can be real conflict between the old and the new. The literature of Europe is one. Modern literature has its roots in the past, and no 'scholar or man of culture can feel that he really understands the new without a knowledge of the old. Truisms as these statements are, there is urgent need for repeating them with conviction at this time.

Beginning the "Æneid" is like setting out upon a broad and beaten highway, along which countless feet have passed in the course of nineteen centuries. It is a spiritual highway, winding through every age and every clime. Thousands have passed this way before you, and if you give your thoughts free wing down this strange pathway of the fancy, they carry you to many a strange scene, — to the pensive citadel of many a lonely student, to many a monkish *scriptorium*, where pious brothers wrote the "Pollio" as carefully as the "Horæ," and illuminated its mar-

gins as gaily, — to the maiden bower of many a learned princess, a Lady Jane Grey, an Elizabeth prisoner, — to the quaint printing-rooms of Aldus and Stephanus and Elzevir, — to Avignon and Vaucluse, — to the court of Charlemagne, — to the Rucellai Gardens, to the Esquiline and the pleasance of Mæcenæ. To many it has been a *via dolorosa*, down which generation after generation of flagellants have passed with tears and extreme reluctance. On that long road there are the strangest meetings, at “unset steven.” In a charming passage in “Ebb-Tide,” Stevenson pictures two university men on the shore of an island of the Pacific, finding common ground in capping a line from the “Æneid,” and he moralizes on the delights of being caned for Virgil so that it becomes a possession for after years. The price of many stripes may not be too great to pay, but personally, I am thankful that I read only a small portion of Virgil in school. The bits I read then are precisely those I take least interest in now.

The first impression the epic made upon me was that of grandeur. I could understand, without a trace of resentment, why men who were born to such a language, and took pleasure in such a poem, would look down upon the speech of the German and English tribesmen as barbarous. To go straight from Augustan Latin to “Beowulf” or the “Edda” or the “Ni-

belungenlied," or even to Shakespeare and to Goethe at their best, makes you feel that the language as language is inferior. By comparison, even the English of the "Midsummer Night's Dream," or the German of "Faust," is, as Byron said, "our harsh, Northern, whistling, grunting guttural." Perhaps the greatest charm of Virgil is "lo bello stile," which Dante felt did him such honour, and which Tennyson has termed, in justifiable superlative, "the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man."

An example or two will help to make this clear. Readers of "Comus" will remember the fine line Milton flings in gratuitously near the beginning —

An old and haughty nation proud in arms,

as descriptive of the Welsh temper. The line has the Miltonic ring and the unmistakable air of Miltonic distinction, but it is really only giving back in English a Virgilian line both in word and feeling —

Hinc populum, late regem, belloque superbum.

What impresses the English reader of Milton, the happy union of sonorous word-music with dignified phrase, and deep feeling, is present in at least an equal degree in Virgil. If we understand the verse nearest to us, we can hope to appreciate the one more remote. If we understand both, we have a greater pleasure

in reading Milton, the pleasure of literary reminiscence. In a very subtle way, the sentiment of the Virgilian phrase seems to blend with Milton's in the quoted line, to reinforce and to enhance it.

III

At this point it may be well to deal with what is commonly termed Virgil's plagiarism. When young persons are told that the "Eclogues" are an imitation of Theocritus, that the "Georgics" are imitated from Hesiod, and that the "Æneid" is not only modelled on the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," but that whole episodes and many lines are taken bodily from the older epics, they feel that their author stands convicted of literary petty larceny. In the rashness of youth, they conclude at once that he has shown great weakness, and proved that his work is inferior to that from which he borrows. Now, Virgil wrote for a refined and learned court circle, with whom Greek literature was a passion; and it was of deliberate design that he modelled his work upon the Greek. The reappearance in the Latin poet of a favourite line, phrase, idea, situation, episode transmuted into something precious and national, gave his Roman audience the same pleasure that we feel in the reappearance of Virgil's phrase in Milton's line. In regard to what is commonly called plagiarism, I hold that those should

take who have the power.¹ The literary weakling merely translates, and the purple patch shames the fustian about it; the man of genius transmutes. If he take gold, or silver, or even baser metal, he fuses all together into a Corinthian brass more precious than gold itself. Dryden says rather flippantly: "The poet who borrows nothing from others is yet to be born; he and the Jews' Messiah will come together"; while Voltaire goes further, holding that if Homer created Virgil, it was the best thing he ever did. Shelley's judgment is: "Virgil, with a modesty that ill became his genius, had affected the fame of an imitator, even while he created anew all that he copied"; and so the list goes on. Lately the question has assumed an international aspect. Virgil has always been the chief poet of the Latin races; the French in particular have never wavered in their allegiance to him; but within our own century the great impulse toward the study of naïve literature, ballads, folklore, primitive epics, has tended to depose Virgil in favour of Homer. Over this point a long battle has raged between the French and the Germans. At present, there are signs that in English-speaking countries, at least, there is a clearer perception of Virgil's peculiar excellences, and al-

¹ "They (poets) import their raw material from any and everywhere and the question at last comes down to this — whether an author have original force enough to assimilate all he has acquired, or that be so overmastering as to assimilate him." — Lowell, *Chaucer*.

though he may never again reign supreme, he cannot long remain a king in exile, without a crown and without devoted subjects. Here again the partizan is an absurdity. Whoever aims at the acquisition of taste or culture or scholarship should leave his mind open to the influence of both the Latin and the Greek.

Another prevalent superstition is the notion that the second six books are so inferior to the first six that they are practically not worth reading. Now, Virgil never surpassed the pictures of the second, the passion of the fourth, or the ethics of the sixth, but it is known that he did not write the books in their present sequence. To despise any of the second six on the ground that they are unfinished, is in all probability to stultify one's self. No other book, as a whole, equals any one of these mentioned; but single episodes and lines of greatest interest abound. To disregard the last six books is to disregard Turnus and Camilla. Take the seventh, which is not usually quoted, and let us look at two or three passages in it chosen almost at random. All readers who have enjoyed the short poem of Tennyson's called "Will" remember with pleasure the comparison of the strong man to

— a promontory of rock,
That compass'd round with turbulent sound,
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

This is really a Virgilian simile which the poet liked so much that he used it twice. In the seventh book, Latinus, unshaken in the midst of confusion, terror, and adverse counsels, is likened to a rock amid the sea: —

Ille velut pelagi rupes immota resistit:
 Ut pelagi rupes, magno veniente fragore,
 Quæ sese, multis circum latrantibus undis,
 Mole tenet scopuli; nequidquam et spumea circum
 Saxa fremunt, laterique illisa refunditur alga.

The figure is borrowed, the sentiment is the same; and whoever can appreciate the beauty of the Tennysonian lines, or the fine *ritardando* close of the “Deserted Village” —

But self-dependent power can time defy,
 As rocks resist the billows and the sky —

may feel encouraged to hope that there are new sources of pleasure awaiting him in Virgil. Again, interpreting the older poetry in the terms of English verse, whoever feels a thrill of horror as the passing bell of Constance de Beverley echoes on the night, is prepared to enjoy a similar beauty in Virgil.

Slow o’er the midnight wave it swung,
 Northumbrian rocks in answer rung;
 To Warkworth cell the echoes rolled,
 His beads the wakeful hermit told,
 The Bamborough peasant raised his head,
 But slept ere half a prayer he said;

So far was heard the mighty knell
 The stag sprung up on Cheviot Fell,
 Spread his broad nostril to the wind,
 Listed before, aside, behind,
 Then couched him down beside the hind,
 And quaked among the mountain fern,
 To hear that sound so dull and stern.

The Roman poet's picture is different. At the unearthly sound, even inanimate nature is deeply stirred. The human touch is reserved to the last, and the comprehending terror of the mothers moves us more profoundly than the panic of the dumb creatures of the wild. At the deadly sound of the war-horn blown by the Fury, —

omne

Contremuit nemus, et silvæ intonuere profundæ.
 Audiit et Triviæ longæ lacus: audiit amnis
 Sulfurea Nar albus aqua, fontesque Velini;
 Et trepidæ matres pressere ad pectora natos.

Virgil never forgets the women and the children. War is less terrible for the men, the red slayers and the slain, than for those who must bide at home and suffer. Virgil's heart is not in the battle, he is really on the side of the mothers who curse it.

It may be hard to bring home the more subtle effects of Virgil's style, but it is worth while trying. He has a pervading sense of the pathetic, of the tears of human affairs, which penetrates all his verse. When

he is girding up his loins for the battles of the final books, he calls upon the Muses for aid: —

Pandite nunc Heliconæ, Deæ, cantusque movete,

The sacred Nine know to what battles the kings were roused, what ranked array followed what leaders and filled the plains, with what men this Italian land which bred me flourished in that age, and with what wars it flamed. For the Immortals can remember and they have power to tell the tale.

Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura.

Surely one is not mistaken in seeing here something more than the plain statement that barely a faint breath of the fame of these deeds has come down to us of the later age. Surely there is some feeling of the contrast between the knowledge of the Immortals and shifting inscience of men; and it cannot be mere fancy to suspect behind the words a sense of “things done long ago and ill-done,” the very sentiment of Wordsworth’s

— old, unhappy, far-off things
And battles long ago.

The style, then, of Virgil, his own way of uttering his thought, whatever that thought may be, is a perpetual delight. The air of distinction is main-

tained from first to last, without effort and without harshness. At the same time it would be hard to find ten consecutive lines without some turn of phrase, some single epithet, some woven harmony of words, on which to linger in pleased surprise. Beside Shakespeare's Gothic rudeness of form and his divine disorder, beside Goethe's long-winded dawdling, his "sprawl" after his "spring," Virgil gives you the sense of finished workmanship. The temple is complete from floor to frieze. If the master-builder wished to change the setting of some single stone, or carve some capital or cornice more delicately, no other eye may scan the fault. It is only echoing the praise of centuries to call Virgil's an unequalled style.

IV

Apart from the constant pleasure derived from the mere form, the chief impressions Virgil's poetry left upon my mind were three — an impression of civilization, an impression of tenderness, an impression of patriotism.

The man of the present day finds himself more in accord with Virgil than with any other poet of antiquity, for the man of the present day lives, consciously or not, under the influence of Christianity; and Virgil is the most Christian of the pagan poets.

Horace, the Epicurean, who called him “animæ dimidium meæ,” said also of him that earth bore no whiter soul. The men of the middle ages found in him a prophet of the Christ. Now whatever else Christianity has done, it has greatly enlarged the range of our sympathies and deepened our emotions. It has made the world thoughtful and sad. This thoughtful sadness, this range and depth of emotion are characteristic of Virgil. Those French and German translators of the Middle Ages who made his epic a tale of chivalry and Æneas and Turnus knights-errant have been often laughed at for their simplicity. But were they not unconsciously right? Virgil is chivalrous in his feeling, with the chivalry of the “Idylls of the King.” He understands as well as the wildest berserker who ever died under a score of foemen’s swords, the fitting end of a warrior’s life. Geraint —

— crowned

A happy life with a fair death, and fell
In battle fighting —

And Virgil’s fighters —

dant funera ferro

Certantes, pulchramque petunt per volnera mortem. ¹

¹ Cf. — an sese medios moriturus in enses
Inferat, et pulchram properet per volnera mortem?

Cf. also *ibid.*, XI, 154 f.

Æneid IX, 400 f.

This primitive feeling is no stranger to such a modern as Nelson. But his conception of a "fair death" is far grander than that of mere mad, hot-blooded killers. England's great captain on the quarter-deck of the *Victory* at Trafalgar, presaging triumph over a continent in arms, mindful only of his duty, his country's honour, and the conduct of this, his last battle, and forgetful of standing weaponless, the stars on his breast marking him for death, is a type of courage, of which the berserker never dreamed. But Virgil feels the stir of sympathy with all disastrous fight. Like Milton, he understands that defeat is not defeat, if the will remain unconquerable. Such speeches as —

Tu ne cede malis; sed contra audentior ito,
Quam tua te Fortuna sinet.

and

Disce, puer, virtutem ex me, verumque laborem;
Fortunam ex aliis

breathe the "deliberate valour" of the modern man. It is to ringing words like these that his heart responds most quickly. They brace the spirit for more than battle, the life that is all battle.

In his sadness, too, Virgil speaks for our later world. The most majestic example of this feeling is the wondering exclamation of Æneas that souls should wish again for earth: —

O pater! anne aliquas ad coelum hinc ire putandum est
Sublimes animas, iterumque in tarda reverti
Corpora? quae lucis miseris tam dira cupido?

Such a thought shows how, nineteen centuries ago,
the Roman poet bowed beneath

— the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world.

Throughout the “Æneid” there is a sense of the complexity of human affairs, a sense of world-wide interests bound up with the exploits and responsibilities of a dominant race. The acts of the hero demand an empire for a stage on which the eyes of the world are fixed. Beside the struggle of Rome and Carthage, of Octavius and Antony, the death of Harold of Hastings, of King Olaf under Svald seem without significance. These wars are but as the flocking of kites and crows; but Virgil’s Æneas and Augustus bear up the world upon their shoulders.

The tenderness of Virgil, his sympathy with the weak, is perhaps his most lovable quality. His mention of the sons of Laocoön, of Camilla’s baby lips and slender limbs, of Silvia’s pet stag, of Dido’s hands dabbled in blood, all show what a deep-hearted poet he was. His references to the mothers are especially noteworthy. A warrior is slain, but at the moment of his hero’s victory, Virgil’s thought turns to the

mother of the dying boy, and to the laborious token of her love.

*Transiit et parmam mucro . . .
Et tunicam, molli mater quam neverat auro.*

One reference has been made already to the mothers who have cause to quake for fear. Two more may serve to show how well Virgil understands the human heart. The youthful warriors in glittering squadrons ride out of the city gates; the women cannot go, but from the battlements they follow them with their eyes, till they are merely a cloud of dust.

*Stant pavidæ in muris matres, oculisque sequuntur
Pulvereamque nubem, et fulgentis ære catervas.*

Again in his wonderful picture of a city sacked, he sees the women clinging to the doorposts of their homes, and pressing their lips to them in despair.

*Tum pavidæ tectis matres ingentibus errant;
Amplexaeque tenent postes, atque oscula figunt.*

Virgil's poetry, especially the "Æneid," I have likened to some great Roman road joining the utmost bounds of a widespread country. Like a road, parts of it are famous because way-worn men have rested at them and found there refreshment and delight. In other words, some lines have gathered significance

from their association with great names. The most famous, perhaps, is the infinitely musical

Manibus date lilia plenīs:

which Dante heard the Blessed chanting in the Paradise of God. To some these words are sacred, because they recall England's veteran statesman strewing flowers on the laureate hearse of Tennyson, as he lay in the Abbey, that high altar of our race. All roads lead to Rome, and Virgil's great poem takes us straight to imperial Rome,¹ the mistress of the world. The reason for the existence of the "Æneid" is Virgil's patriotism. "The impulse both of poets and historians was to build up a commemorative monument; not as among the Greeks, to present the spectacle of human life in its most animated, varied and noble movements."² In this year of reminiscence³ it should not be hard for any subject of the British Empire to understand Virgil's pride in his country. Place our bead-roll of heroes beside the file of those whom Anchises pointed out to Æneas in the under-world, or those whose deeds were fashioned on the famous shield —

— clipei non enarrabile textum —

¹ The city which thou seest no other deem
Than great and glorious Rome, Queen of the Earth,
So far renowned, and with the spoils enriched
Of nations. *Paradise Regained*, IV, 44-47.

² Sellar, 287.

³ Written in 1897.

set the battle with the Armada, or Trafalgar beside "Actia bella," and we thrill with poet's own deep emotion. The most famous expression of it is in sublime close of Anchises' speech: —

Excudent alii spirantia mollius aera,
Credo equidem; vivos ducent de marmore vultus;
Orabunt caussas melius; cœlique meatus
Describent radio, et surgentia sidera dicent.
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
Hæc tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

The similar limitations and the similar destiny of our race should bring home to us the spirit of these majestic lines. One English writer, to whom perverse criticism would deny the name of poet, has infused it into English verse. Macaulay is the most patriotic of historians, and he never fails to awaken the patriot passion in the breast, even in singing those glorious legends of early Rome, which none but a brave and high-minded race could have imagined. In

The stone that breathes and struggles,
The brass that seems to speak; —

he comes very close to the first part of the extract. The manifest destiny of Roman civilization is brought out in such ringing lines as these: —

Leave gold and myrrh and jewels,
Rich table and soft bed,
To them who of man's seed are born
Whom woman's milk hath fed.

Thou wast not made for lucre,
For pleasure, nor for rest;
Thou, that art sprung from the war-god's loins,
And hast tugged at the she-wolf's breast.

Leave to the soft Campanian
His baths and his perfumes;
Leave to the sordid race of Tyre
Their dyeing vats and looms:
Leave to the sons of Carthage
The rudder and the oar:
Leave to the Greek his marble Nymphs
And scrolls of wordy lore.

Thine, Roman, is the pilum:
Roman, the sword is thine,
The even trench, the bristling mound
The legion's ordered line;
And thine the wheels of triumph,
Which with their laurelled train
Move slowly up the shouting streets
To Jove's eternal fane.

V

But it is high time for me to show some reason for trespassing on the preserves of the Professor of Classics. The indirect influence of Virgil upon English literature is seen first in the sway of what may be called the Troynovant legend. It can be traced to Geoffrey of Monmouth in the twelfth century. Virgil was not only transformed into a magician by mediæval fantasy, but his name was one to conjure with.

In imitation of Æneas's voyage from Troy to found Rome, there springs up a companion piece, the voyage of Brutus, his descendant, to Albion, to found New Troy, Troynovant, or London. A parallel tradition is found in France, whence the myth was conveyed to England in the authority Geoffrey used and which he called *vetustissimus*. The idea flattered the national pride. Wace, a Jerseyman, made a French poem on Geoffrey's history, and this Layamon, a priest of Ernley, again translated and amplified into the poem known as "Brut." The basis must be a collection of Celtic tales; and from the outset, Geoffrey and his romance were fiercely assailed, as a fabler and fables. Very surprising is the stream of poetry this Archdeacon of Monmouth in the twelfth century set free to flow as it would. Down to the middle of the seventeenth century the myth was generally regarded as fact. Even Milton, although he cannot help feeling suspicious, will not rashly set it aside, and devotes a large part of the first chapter of his history to recounting "descents of ancestry long continued, laws and exploits not plainly seeming to be borrowed or devised." Elizabethan literature bristles with allusions to this legend. As might be expected, Drayton makes ample use of it in his "Polyolbion"; and finds it necessary to protest against the destructive criticism of the time.

And they but idly talk upbraiding us with lies
 That *Geoffrey Monmouth*, first our Brutus did devise,
 Not heard of till his time our Adversary says.¹

Jasper Fisher has a play with the title "Fuimus Troes
 — The True Trojans,"² in which occur stanzas like
 these: —

Ancient bards have sung
 With lips dropping honey,
 And a sugared tongue
 Of our noble knights:
 How Brute did giants tame,
 And by Isis current,
 A second Troy did frame,
 A centre of delights.

This history of England, "Antiquitee of Faery Land," is the book Sir Guyon³ reads in the castle of Alma. From this the material for the first English tragedy "Gorboduc" was taken, as well as the material for the greatest, "Lear." Here also we find Cymbeline and "Sabrina fair." It is little wonder Sir Guyon looked into it "greedily." The material of these old tales is certainly Celtic; but for our purpose the significant fact is their connection with Virgil's epic, and the faint shadowing of the original tale.

¹ *Polyolbion*, x, 243-55; cf. *ibid.*, 219-327.

² Dodsley's *Old Plays*, vii, 411.

³ *Faerie Queene*, bk. ii, canto x.

The history of the Virgil translations in English begins at least as early as the setting-up of the first printing-press in the *scriptorium* at Westminster. Caxton made and printed a prose translation of the great Mantuan. This performance did not please Gavin Douglas, and to shame the Southron and vindicate Virgil, he made a translation of his own. This again was used by the ill-fated Earl of Surrey in his translation. Phaer turned the first ten books of the "Æneid" into the lolloping "fourteeners" so fashionable toward the end of Elizabeth's reign, and the work was finished by Twine. The men of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are not fond of translating Virgil. Ovid and Horace are more to their taste. But the number of those who have been tempted to try their hand at the hardest of tasks is very great. Waller englished part of the fourth "Æneid," as did Surrey; Denham translated the second as well as the fourth into blank verse. Roscommon turned the sixth "Eclogue" into verse, and Cowley, part of the second "Georgic." "Glorious John" gave up a large part of his old age to making what is still in all probability the best complete version of Virgil in our language. Addison, as might be expected from his character, was drawn to Virgil. His essay on the "Georgics" is said to have been written when he was twenty-one. Besides, he turned the fourth "Georgic,"

except the story of Aristæus, into Popian couplets, and the episode of Achemenides in the third "Æneid" into Miltonic blank verse. Few get beyond the fourth book; but mention should be made of the adventurous William Hamilton, of Bangour, who versified the incident of Lausus and Mezentius in the tenth.¹ Our own age has been especially rich in translations of Virgil. Professor Conington made two, one in the metre of "Marmion" and one in prose. The last poet to undertake the entire "Æneid" was William Morris. He used the long "fourteeners" which were so effective in "Sigurd the Volsung," but they do not please all English critics. Mr. Frederic Harrison speaks of the work with scant respect as a "marry come up, my merry men men all sort of ballad."² A really satisfactory version of Virgil in English is yet to be made.

VI

More direct influence still upon our literature is distinctly traceable to Virgil.³ Langland knows him only as the hero of a grotesque mediæval myth;⁴ but

¹ Chalmers, xv, 649.

² At the same time Mr. Myers, who must be an excellent judge, pronounces it to be "brilliant and accurate." Who shall decide when doctors disagree?

³ It is impossible within the limits of this lecture even to outline Virgil's influence upon pastoral poetry from Spenser down.

⁴ *Piers Plowman*, bk. xii, 43 f.

his contemporary, Chaucer, finds room for him in his "Hous of Fame." In this, he summarizes the "Æneid" and slurs over everything but the love-story. Dido fascinates him. He can hardly tear himself away from the entrancing tale. Not content with what he finds in Virgil, he borrows from Ovid's "Heroides," and at last, like Shakespeare afterwards, he brings in frankly his own variations upon the given theme; —

Non other auctor alegge I,—

and he puts a new speech in Dido's mouth. Dido also figures in his galaxy of "good women." One other sign of his appreciation of Virgil is seen in the way he renders the apparition of Venus: —

— that day,
 Going in a queynt array;
 As she had been a huntresse,
With wynd blowinge upon her tresse.

This is the story which has enthralled the imagination of the world. The great Elizabethans teem with references to it. Nash and Marlowe made a drama¹ of it. But in this, as in many other things, Shakespeare teaches us, as no one else can. His references, outside of "Troilus and Cressida," are nearly all to some aspect of the Carthaginian queen's unhappy

¹ Cf. Hayward, *The Iron Age*, pt. II.

love; but he takes most glorious liberties¹ with his subject. According to Virgil, Dido slew herself as soon as the false Trojan's galleys were hull down on the horizon; but Shakespeare has another vision. Two young lovers lately wed are watching the moonlit heavens in the gardens of Belmont. They give themselves up to the loveliness of the scene, and are so full of new-found happiness that they can endure the least shadow of a far-off, romantic melancholy: —

In such a night
 Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
 Upon the wild sea-banks and waved her love
 To come again to Carthage.

Full moonlight on the sea! Can anything be fuller of yearning, except the single lonely figure on the shore with its hopeless signal of welcome? But Shakespeare sees life in the round. Moving as is the love-tale of Dido, it has even its ridiculous side. Two epithets do it all: "*widow* Dido," "*widower* Æneas."² Spring is the only mating-time. The loves of the middle-aged do not move us except to laughter.

Nearer our own day, English poets have given utterance to their personal sentiments in regard to

¹ Turberville (*Of Dido and the Truth of her Death*) justifies her *against* the testimony of Virgil; he holds she slew herself to avoid shame.

² *Tempest*, II, i.

Virgil. Dryden calls him his divine master. Cowper says that he

should have deem'd it once an effort vain
To sweeten more sweet Maro's matchless strain,—

until Mr. Hayley gave him a copy of Heyne's edition. Wordsworth and Matthew Arnold find interest in the poet's tomb. Wordsworth's greatest joy is in the landscape —

that delicious Bay
Parthenope's Domain — Virgilian haunt;
Illustrated with never-dying verse,
And by the Poet's laurel shaded tomb,
Age after age to Pilgrims from all lands
Endeared.¹

Arnold feels the contrast between this and Heine's resting-place in trim Montmartre. His feeling for Virgil is warmer than Wordsworth's. The irregular verse bears the accent of deep feeling.

Ah, I knew that I saw
Here no sepulchre built
In the laurell'd rock, o'er the blue
Naples bay, for a sweet
Tender Virgil.

In that fine series of appreciations, her "Vision of Poets," Mrs. Browning fails in her praise of Virgil, all the more dismally, as the lines on Lucretius, which

¹ *Memorials of a Tour in Italy.*

come next, are a brilliant success. But the last is the best. It is curious to think that, after five centuries of modern English literature, we had to wait until the very end for an adequate essay like Mr. Myers's, for an adequate poem like Tennyson's. The latter written at the request of the Mantuans not only masses in a consummate way the chief excellences of Virgil, but it shows how near English verse can reach to his rich music, and is instinct with one great poet's gratitude to another. With it, as with some jewelled and embroidered band, too precious for such use, I draw together these my poor belated gleanings from Virgilian fields: —

Roman Virgil, thou that singest
 Ilion's lofty temples robed in fire,
Ilion falling, Rome arising,
 wars, and filial faith, and Dido's pyre.

Landscape-lover, lord of language,
 more than he that sang the Works and Days;
All the chosen coin of fancy
 flashing out from many a golden phrase;

Thou that singest wheat and woodland
 tilth and vineyard, hive and horse and herd;
All the charm of all the Muses
 often flowering in a lonely word.

Thou that seest Universal
 Nature moved by Universal mind;
Thou majestic in thy sadness
 at the doubtful doom of humankind;

Light among the vanish'd ages;
 star that gildest yet this phantom shore;
Golden branch amid the shadows,
 kings and realms that pass to rise no more;

Now thy Forum roars no longer,
 fallen every purple Cæsar's dome —
Thou, thine ocean-roll of rhythm
 sound for ever of Imperial Rome.

Now the Rome of slaves has perished,
 And the Rome of freemen holds her place,
I, from out the Northern Island
 sunder'd once from all the human race,

I salute thee, Mantovano,
 I that loved thee since my day began,
Wielder of the stateliest measure
 ever moulded by the lips of man.

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A

DATE DUE

DEC 4 1928

12-16-49

JAN 23 1929

JAN 25 1932

JUN 2 1952

MAR 28 1932

~~JAN 18 1957~~

APR 24 1934

NOV 29 1937

JUL 12 1983

JAN 25 1938

STORAGE

DEC 16 1938

APR 25 1944

MAY 15 1944

FEB 20 1945

NOV 16 48

30 192



